

NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD

By
GORDON B. ENDERS

With
EDWARD ANTHONY

WITH THIRTY TWO PHOTOGRAPHS

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TO

MILES W. VAUGHN

FORMER FAR EASTERN BUREAU CHIEF OF THE UNITED PRESS, AT WHOSE

SUGGESTION THIS BOOK WAS WRITTEN

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PART ONE

NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY DAYS IN OLD TIBET

Get your child a teacher whose
Aim is not to teach him Views
Or Opinions (Comes the day
When he'll throw all that away)
Teach him something that will last,
Let him study yonder vast,
Rugged, overwhelming scene
Till he knows what mountains mean

—*Book of Hollman's Maxims*

AT the age when most American boys are collecting marbles or postage stamps, I was collecting semi-precious stones, which are more plentiful in Tibet than anywhere else in the world. I had hundreds of varieties of turquoise, topaz, moonstone, aquamarine, garnet, tourmaline, and even sapphire—all gathered at small expense or by the process of "swapping" with native boys or with British tommyes stationed along the frontier. Eventually I added to my collection a few small nuggets of Tibetan gold, and a tiny chamois bag of gold dust.

It was my boyhood interest in this collecting hobby that led me to think always of inner Tibet as a place filled with stores of hidden treasure. My imagination was stimulated by reading tales of the California gold rush, of the gold discoveries in Alaska and South Africa. As I launched my paper kites and watched the winds carry them northward, I pictured myself as sailing with them, like one of the Himalayan eagles, into the far-off plateaux and valleys where a million Tibetan gold washers gathered their harvest from the glowing yellow sands of ancient river beds.

I was a typical American schoolboy in short pants and brown cotton shirt when I first went to live on the frontier. My father, a teacher, had a post in India which involved travelling up and down the United Provinces, stretching from Benares on the south to the Tibetan boundary on the north.

Our home at Simtolah was on the top of a 7000-foot mountain which straddled the British-made dividing line between India and Tibet. We were 120 miles beyond the last steel rail of British transportation at Kathgodam. Everything around us was basically Tibetan, although the native population was overlaid with a strange frontier mixture of Indian hillmen and plainsmen.

Beyond Simtolah lay the Hermit Kingdom of Tibet. Entry into it was forbidden to all foreigners except the Chinese, who exercised nominal suzerainty over the country and controlled its primitive outside contacts, commercial and political. As for other foreigners, death at the hands of the cruel and fanatical lamas was the price that had been repeatedly paid by venturesome spirits who had sought under various disguises to penetrate the interior of this mountain kingdom, perched on lofty plateaux at the very top of the world. No more than a scant half-dozen explorers in a century had been able to go in, even a little way, and come back to tell their fragmentary tale. Great natural wealth there certainly was in that mystical land, wealth sufficient to stir the cupidity of Russia, England and the other great powers, already engaged in bitter rivalry of intrigue over it.

On the very doorstep of my home at Simtolah was the frontier of this ancient country, which was to be the target of international ferments throughout my lifetime. It was an unusual setting for an American boy to grow up in—right in the midst of the rugged Himalayas, with the highest mountains in the world always in sight on the northern horizon. My favourite sport was kite flying, which has been developed into a fine art in China and Tibet. I combined it with mountain climbing, hunting and horseback riding.

"Simtolah" was merely the name of our mountain. It was eight miles from the village of Almorah, a frontier post with a small garrison of British soldiers belonging to the King's Own Rifles, reinforced by picturesque native troops, screw-gun and cannister batteries, mule transport, signal and medical units. The native troops varied from time to time,

including such familiars as Gurkhas, Sikhs, Punjabs and Bengal Lancers.

Almorah was one tiny unit in India's northern frontier line of defence, which stretched from Afghanistan to Burma, employing 250,000 soldiers, of whom perhaps 50,000 were British. The whole situation to the north was full of dynamite, with the sealed and silent land of Tibet as the focus of an imperialistic drama in which England, China and Russia were the principal actors.

The first language I learned in India was the Hindustani of the plains, to which I quickly added the Tibetan polyglot patois of Almorah. I used English only with my parents and our governess, and in conversation with occasional visitors or with British soldiers on their lonely outpost duty. With my brother and sister, with my playmates, and with the household servants I came gradually to speak nothing but Hindustani, mixed with Tibetan words.

There were six Westerners in the family group—my mother and father, my older sister, my younger brother and our English governess. Our home was an oblong stone bungalow which stood high and alone on the levelled top of a granite hill. On a lower shelf behind the bungalow was a long stone building containing the kitchens and the servants' quarters, its galvanized iron roof just level with the garden terrace of the house above. The front of the house, looking straight into the mountains of Tibet, rose above a stone-flagged veranda which was raised only a few inches off the ground. It was on this veranda that we children studied every morning and recited our lessons to my mother and the governess. Concentration on lessons was never easy for us, because more interesting than our textbooks was the snow-clad peak of Nanda Devi, gleaming mysteriously on the horizon like a fiery opal and beckoning our imaginations into the jagged receding walls of Make-Believe Land.

When our school tasks were ended, in mid-afternoon, and our books were closed for the day, we became charges of Jowar Singh, a Hindu hillman (Pahari) of high caste from Tiri, who was our devoted mentor and teacher in the customs and ways of frontier India. We always called him "Jowaru," which is an intimate diminutive form of his name, similar to the familiar American use of "Charley" for Charles.

Jowar was six feet tall, powerfully built but without an ounce of superfluous flesh. He was a typical woodsman, master of forest and jungle. He walked with the springy gait of a mountaineer, effortlessly and with no slightest waste of energy. He had a surprising crop of thick rust-red hair and a red moustache, neatly trimmed. His complexion matched the surface of the walnut furniture in our bungalow dining-room, and his nose was like the beak of one of the golden-headed eagles which we used to watch in their flights over the mile-deep valley in front of our home.

Not in all India, I think, could another man of Jowar's caste standing have been found working as a domestic servant. He was a *thakur* of the warrior caste, which is second only to the priesthood, and he had the mentality and dignity of those who wear for life the three cotton threads of the *thakurs*. The reason for his comparatively lowly position was that, early in life, he had been betrayed by a woman and had left his distant village of Tiri in order to wipe out the memory of this misfortune.

His devotion to us three children was extraordinary. But to me in particular, as the older boy, he gave special attention. Throughout Asia the importance of the oldest son is emphasized to an extent hardly understandable to the Western mind. The family is the great social and economic unit, and the headship of the family passes always to the oldest son. So, to Jowar Singh, my training and education were his paramount responsibility. It was his lifework, by which he would be judged.

But it developed that a far more important figure in turning the channel of my life toward its eventual goal in Tibet was Jowar's father-in-law, a remarkable Tibetan named Chanti.

My first meeting with Chanti took place in the village of Almorah, where I had gone one afternoon with Jowar on a round of household errands. When our tasks were completed, we followed our usual custom of dropping in at the caravan-serai, so that Jowar could have a smoke and gather the latest news and gossip of the market place.

This village "inn" always fascinated me. For the Tibetans and Indians in Almorah it was a combination of theatre, market place and newspaper. Architecturally, the caravan-serai consisted of four ten-foot stone walls, surrounding a patch

of open, level ground 150 feet square, where the mules and ponies of arriving caravans were staked for the night. Along two inner sides of the wall were rows of open lean-to's, with corrugated iron roofs and stone dividing walls at twelve-foot intervals. These were the "rooms" without doors, in which the personnel of the caravans piled their goods, cooked their meals and spent their nights. Each little room had its dung fire, kindled on the dirt floor, around which the occupant and his guests exchanged news or haggled over their business transactions.

On this particular occasion, as Jowar and I entered the main gate, we found the courtyard more crowded than usual. A caravan of thirty animals had just arrived from Tibet, and there was a buzz of excitement which indicated that these visitors were of unusual importance. The animals, herded close in the centre, were surrounded by a pack of ferocious Tibetan dogs—heavy-jowled mastiffs with long shaggy black or brown hair. Mules, ponies and dogs were setting up a terrific clamour, punctuated by the clang of the bronze and brass cooking utensils getting into action around a dozen glowing fires.

Jowar made his way nonchalantly to one of the fires, where five men were squatting, warming their hands mechanically, talking and passing around a bubbling hookah. On the fire a brass kettle was filled with fat stewing mutton. Around the walls were piled the packs and bales from three or four animals. The contents of the bundles were obvious to me from past experience, in spite of the jute wrappings. I could see the dull gleam of Tibetan bronze rich in gold, and a bale of pelts and several bundles of camel's wool and yak hair; finally, a half-dozen old English biscuit tins tied together, which I knew contained musk, worth \$15 an ounce. These were the typical exports which the caravans brought out of Tibet. One other article of trade, more precious still, would be carried by each man in a woven belt strapped around his waist—gold dust, which filtered out of the country only in small quantities because most of it was retained by the Tibetan monasteries and locked away in their grim stone fortresses.

Four of the five men at the fire were new arrivals from Tibet; the fifth was an elderly Tibetan whose clothing showed that he belonged, like Jowar, in Almorah. Jowar squatted down beside him. I, as usual, greeted the party respectfully

and remained standing outside their little circle, watching what was going on in the courtyard.

I noticed, however, that Jowar treated his neighbour, the fifth man, with great respect, and that they whispered together confidentially for a few moments. Then the turn of their eyes made me aware that they were talking about me. Presently Jowar motioned to me, and when I approached, they both rose and Jowar said impressively:

"Gordon *baba*, this is Chanti, a rich man and my teacher."

The two terms by which Jowar characterized Chanti are perhaps the most flattering in the whole Asiatic vocabulary. In fact, I had never heard Jowar go so far as to use both of them together regarding a single individual. The phrase "rich man" indicates worldly position; the phrase "my teacher" implies mental and intellectual superiority. I was instantly aware that I was being introduced to a person of the very greatest importance.

I offered my hand, which Chanti took with an impressive formality.

"I have heard much of thee, my son, from Jowar Singh," he said. He made a gesture in the direction of the four caravaneers, still squatting impassively by the fire. "These are my brethren, from my homeland, who are come to trade and bring me tidings."

The remarkable thing about his words was that he used toward me the unusual thou-and-thee expression, which in India has high significance. As a matter of fact, it was the first time that I had been addressed in this manner by a native. It indicated the teacher-and-disciple relationship, without necessity for further explanation. It drew me at one stroke to this man, whom I felt instinctively I could love and respect. My acceptance of his mode of address meant that for all future time we would be *guru* and *chela*, teacher and disciple.

I acknowledged his compliment with a silent bow. At his suggestion, I sat down with them, squatting between Jowar and Chanti, while they began discussing earnestly the news that the caravan had brought. By this time the mutton was ready, and one of the Tibetans served each of us with a generous piece; we ate this with our hands, and washed it down with a wooden bowl of Chinese brick tea mixed with rancid yak butter and boiling water.

"The Russians have at last made their proposals to the

Dalai Lama," said Chanti. "The Tsar promises to adopt the Lamaist religion and to make it the official faith of Russia. There is to be a railroad from St. Petersburg to Lhasa. Finally, a Russian grand duke will be installed at Lhasa, with a squadron of Cossacks. So, at least, these men say."

"It is unbelievable!" declared Jowar Singh, with a blaze in his eyes. "India and England would not permit it. It would mean war."

"I think also that it is not likely to be accepted," answered Chanti. "It is merely the wish of that old fox Dorjief. He plots to give the gold of Tibet to Russia."

There followed a long discussion of the matter. Boy-like, I understood only a little of what they said, but their tenseness and excitement, and their conviction that war, or something like war, was threatening, stirred my blood and my imagination. During the days that followed I plied Jowar with questions, until the meaning of it all began to clarify.

Dorjief, I learned as time went on, was regarded as a tool of Russia in her designs on British India. He was a Lamaist priest who had become very influential with the Dalai Lama at Lhasa, and who was now plotting to open up Tibet to Russia exclusively. Only the year before he had visited St. Petersburg for the second time, and had brought back to Lhasa the draft of a secret treaty, the terms of which were now beginning to leak out.

In discussing Tibet, we were always conscious that this Hermit Kingdom occupied the centre of Asia, and that its rugged mountains constituted nature's barrier between the rival imperialisms of Russia, England and China. Even more effective as a barrier than the snow-carpeted plateaux were the fanatical inhabitants of Tibet, citizens of a theocracy following blindly the commands of rulers whom they regarded as divine beings. At the head of church and state stood the holy trinity of the Grand Lamas—the Dalai Lama as the temporal ruler at Lhasa, the Panchan as the spiritual head of Lamaism in his Vatican at Tashilhunpo, the Mongolian Grand Lama, or Hutuketu, as a sort of Holy Ghost sitting far removed from the ordinary life of Tibetans in the distant and almost mythical city of Urga.

Parliamentary government as known in Western civilization did not exist in Tibet in the year of Our Lord 1903. True,

there was a National Assembly, composed of princes, nobles and priests. But the noble families were merely relatives of past and present Grand Lamas, and therefore constituted no serious curb on the supreme will of the theocracy. Unless the Grand Lamas disagreed, their parliament was nothing but their echo. In a country where more than a third of the male population belongs to the priesthood there can be little opposition to the government of the church, which is accepted among the unlettered population as an inevitable and elemental force, like the sun, the moon and the seasons.

Nevertheless, Russian imperialism was never deterred even by elemental forces. It sought constantly in Tibet to create a rift among the Grand Lamas, and Dorjief's function in Russian diplomacy was to stimulate any differences that might provide an opening.

Jowar's great loyalty was to India, and Russian domination of Tibet meant to him only a soon-impending advance by Russia against India. The way out, he felt, was for England to strike quickly against the Russian threat, before it had gone too far. Jowar told me repeatedly that England ought to go into Tibet, at once, and occupy it by force of arms.

Chanti, however, had a different viewpoint. I listened eagerly to his discussions with Jowar. Two or three times weekly they had meetings, and always I was permitted to sit with them. For some undefined reason, my presence seemed to be important to them. Often I felt that Chanti was talking to me, more than to the fiery Jowar. The declared relationship between Chanti and myself, that of teacher and disciple, grew gradually clearer. Chanti was seeking to make a Tibetan patriot of me, in anticipation of the time when the Hermit Kingdom must throw open its doors and take its part in the world. In some vague way, he felt that an American boy, thoroughly grounded in a knowledge of Tibet, might eventually play a part in international developments. As the years went on, his purpose became clearer.

On the Russian question, Chanti was a pacifist. His great loyalty was to Tibet, and he wanted no foreign domination of his country, neither Russian, English nor Chinese. For Dorjief he had only contempt. "The man is a traitor," he said, "and his plans will surely come to naught." Armed British entry into Tibet, which Jowar advocated, seemed all wrong to Chanti. "Russia will be checkmated," he said,

"but it need not be done in a way that will make Tibet the greatest sufferer. England is Tibet's best friend: she is the only neighbour that sincerely wishes for Tibet's peace, independence and prosperity through trade."

Chanti was below average height, stockily built with a suggestion of dignified portliness. His hair was short, stubbly, black sprinkled with grey. His features were Mongolian rather than Caucasian, but a highly refined version of the usually coarse Mongol countenance, with an oddly high forehead above wide-set eyes, prominent cheekbones and low nose bridge. Deep wrinkles at the inner corners of his eyes grew deeper when he talked and gave an expression of great earnestness. His lips were thin, his teeth regular and white. Genial, intelligent, he carried himself with a certain leisurely impressiveness. Born of pure Tibetan stock from the hills back of Almorah, he had been sent by the British to a government school and the American Missionary College in Allahabad; then had graduated to become a local unofficial go-between for the British at Almorah. He spoke excellent clipped English, but used it rarely. His dress was like that of a well-to-do Hindu—a coloured turban, a long black coat and tight-fitting muslin trousers, coloured shoes with upturned toes.

Chanti was both well-versed in Western usage and punctilious in satisfying it. He had known my father for many years, and shortly after our meeting in the caravanseraï he paid a formal call upon my parents at Simtolah, where he acquainted them with his desire to "assist in my education." My father, who had lived in India too long to be surprised at anything, made the proper ceremonious reply to his guest's suggestion, and informed Chanti in elaborate Hindustani that our house was always his home.

An important stage in my relationship with Chanti was marked by his first gift to me. During the years that followed I received many gifts from him, and I came to realize that each one was a symbol, designed to stir my imagination and direct my attention to some new field of interest. On this first occasion it was a Gurkha *kukri* that he brought and placed in my hand with a formal word of congratulation on the occasion that prompted it—whether this was a birthday or some other anniversary I have now forgotten.—The *kukri* is

the curved knife which is the favourite weapon of the Gurkhas. It is shaped like the letter J, with its edge on the inside of the curve, and a handle elaborately decorated with carving and insets of turquoise and silver, showing brightly above the sheath of coloured leather, copper-bound.

To me the *kukri* became the equivalent of jack-knife, scout knife and valiant clearer of underbrush. I hacked away with it at all the trees in the neighbourhood of our bungalow, and carried it on my long walks with Jowar into the surrounding mountains. I imitated the Gurkha troops whom I saw in the village practising their conventionalised and highly theatrical "strokes," which are in the nature of a war dance; and I saw them use the same knives more practically at festivals, where the champions of the *kukri* vied with each other in decapitating a goat at a single stroke with this small weapon.

Chanti adroitly used my interest in his gift to turn my attention toward Nepal, homeland of the Gurkhas. The border of Nepal was barely six miles on the other side of the village of Almora. This, too, was a closed frontier, almost as difficult to cross as the boundary of Tibet.

To Chanti, indeed, Nepal was one with Tibet, despite the fact that it had become a British protectorate. Religiously it was Tibetan, worshipping in the lama way, with multi-storied monasteries rising against a thousand cliffs and crags and governing the countryside with a stern and unbending authority.

As a matter of fact, Nepal regards itself as the historic cradle of the Lamaist religion, for it was a princess of Nepal twelve centuries ago who went to Lhasa as a bride and was the motivating force for a combination of Buddhism and Tibetan demonology which eventually became the Lamaism of to-day. Essentially, this Lamaism is based on belief in reincarnation—the Panchan Lama is the incarnation of the Lord Buddha; the Dalai Lama is the incarnation of Buddha's son-in-law, Avalokiteswara; the Urgan Lama is the incarnation of Taranatha-lama, who brought the art of writing into Tibet. These three are the "trinity," but lesser incarnations are found heading a great number of the important lamaseries throughout Tibet, Mongolia and Nepal. They are all "holy men," wielding unquestioned power of life and death over their followers; they regard their bodies as the actual bodies of the saints whose names they bear, who have come

down from paradise to point the way; good Lamaists believe that they neither eat, sleep nor perform the ordinary bodily functions of an earth-bound human being.

There were no "incarnations" among the monasteries around Almorah, for these were all small and comparatively unimportant, like the Union chapels in American farming villages. But there was plenty of evidence of the power of the religion over its followers. The Lamaists are great believers in pilgrimages, and native Tibetans from around Almorah were always setting out, in groups of half a hundred or more, on visits to some distant monastery where they would receive the blessing of the "incarnation" located there.

My first meeting with an "incarnation" took place when I was ten years old, on the trail between the Nepal border and Almorah. An enormous pilgrimage of Lamaists had come out of Nepal on its way to visit the Panchan Lama at his capital in Tashilhunpo, 600 miles north and eastward in Tibet. The pilgrimage embraced all the inhabitants of a dozen Nepalese villages, men, women and children, more than 2000 people in all. Their herds had been decimated by a scourge of wolves, and the remedy lay in going to the incarnation of Lord Buddha for expiation of the unknown sin which had caused this visitation.

From a sloping hillside, where Jowar, Chanti and I had posted ourselves, I watched this long line of believers, all afoot, marching down the trail. They were headed by a group of shaven-headed monks dressed in plum-coloured robes of rough homespun. One of the monks bore a ceremonial umbrella of bright yellow, the sacred colour of Lamaism, over the head of a wizened old man whose attire was no different from that of the other monks except for a hint of scarlet and gold embroidery at the throat and on the tops of his heavy white-felt boots. He had a straggly white beard, beady eyes, and his lips moved continually in prayer as the talonlike fingers of his left hand deftly counted the beads of his rosary. He walked in a complete abstraction, with the expression of a man whose thoughts are far away, in his native Nirvana.

Behind him came the army of villagers, each carrying his baggage on his back, most of them holding in the right hand a prayer wheel which was kept spinning by an effortless twist of the wrist. Inside every prayer wheel was the usual tight-

packed roll of crude brown paper printed as closely as possible throughout its astonishing length with an endless repetition of *Om mani padme hum*—"All hail the jewel in the lotus." This is the *mantram*, or magic religious phrase, the only prayer necessary to a Lamaist. Its precise significance or origin has never been explained, but the "jewel in the lotus" refers to the Lord Buddha, who is generally depicted as sitting cross-legged in the heart of a lotus.

As the head of the procession approached our vantage point, Chanti led us down to the trail. At a gesture of salutation from him, the group of monks stopped, halting the long column of pilgrims. Chanti, who was evidently known to the monks, exchanged a few respectful words with the "incarnation," and introduced us. The old abbot bowed politely, but obviously his mind was on something else. My personal reaction was mixed—I was filled with awe, but considerably puzzled to understand how a man so old and wrinkled could be the incarnation of a real saint.

Jowar, who was a complete sceptic when it came to the mysteries and miracles of Lamaism, hummed a salty old Indian folk song in Hindustani as we went back to our post on the hillside:

Like us he walks,
 Like us he talks,
 He breathes and hears,
 He hopes and fears,
 He eats and drinks,
 He dreams and thinks,
 He sees and feels,
 He stands, he kneels,
 Like anyone of humbler station
 Who isn't Buddha's incarnation.

The food he eats,
 The breads, the meats,
 The wine he sips
 With holy lips—
 They turn to smells
 That he expels
 Like humbler men
 That do not ken
 The glory and the exaltation
 Of being Buddha's incarnation.

To the drone of Jowar's satirical singsong, I watched the straggling column resume its march. I was conscious of no thought other than a great desire to join this trek, to march with these pilgrims through the Niti Ghaat pass, 16,500 feet above sea level; to cross the plateau beyond, through the lake country and along the edge of the Gartok gold fields. My disappointment that I could not be one of these adventurers heightened the lure and mystery of Tibet, which had already begun to grip me.

On a relief map which my native playmates and I had constructed out of clay on my playground at Simtolah, I marked the path, laying it out with laborious efforts to follow the fragmentary guidance of such maps and charts as Chanti could find for me at the British barracks. The son of a Hindu carpenter did the rough measurements for the mountains, rivers and valleys, so that big ones were big and little ones little. Another boy, son of a Mohammedan cook, painted the clay map, producing for the gold fields a brilliant yellow pigment compounded of lime and cow manure.

I resolved that one day I, like the Nepalese pilgrims, would make the long trek beyond the border, not to visit shrines, but in search of the same yellow metal which had lured my grandfather across the American continent to California in the days of the Forty-niners. Some day the forbidden frontier of Tibet would be opened. Perhaps I would be the one to open it!

CHAPTER TWO

I MEET MY FIRST CHINESE

Sometimes I gain, sometimes I lose ;
Sometimes I'm bruised, sometimes I bruise.
One day (in Yenchow style) *you* cheat,
Then *I* become the God Deceit.
We fool each other pleasantly,
And neither of us bends the knee.
You are your stern and proper self,
Who'd never sin . . . except for self—
While I of course do nothing rash . . .
Except to earn a little cash.
Then let us trade—and do it gaily—
And pick each other's pockets daily.

—*Song of the Shantung Trader*

EACH spring I watched the snows recede northward from Simtolah until the passes from Tibet into Almorah were fit for travel. The season would bring renewed vigour to Chanti, who would often come to our home and sit through the late afternoon hours with his eyes fixed on his beloved north, talking with Jowar and me about the bartering Chinese traders who drove their pack animals through Tibet from China to India and back again, year after year.

The first Chinese I ever met was one of these traders, Wu Ming-fu. He arrived in Almorah early in May, leading two heavily laden mules into the caravanseraï. It was his sixth round trip between Chengtu, 1800 miles away as the crow flies, and the Indian frontier. Two years were consumed in each complete circuit of his itinerary, with the long winter months spent wherever the snow overtook him, usually in the Chinese quarter of some Tibetan market town.

Jowar and Chanti greeted him as an old friend. He was a diminutive, wiry individual with a face the colour of old leather, deeply marked by the burning sun and icy winds of the cold plateaux. His attire was a mixture of Tibetan and Chinese—a raw sheepskin coat over a pair of quilted cotton trousers. His head was covered with a brown beaverskin cap

with ear flaps negligently turned up and a long queue whipping restlessly against his back.

Despite the hardships which had left their marks on his complexion, his whole appearance was jaunty. He radiated good humour; his smile was facile; he gave one the impression of not having a care in the world. Whatever happened, he made the best of it. For him, there was a silver lining to every dark cloud.

Business was good, he told us, speaking in a stilted but clear Hindustani. He had lost only one animal all the way from Tashilhunpo. Several bridges were down along the old trail, but he had found a way around with the loss of only a few days. There were bandits near the Mobangtse lakes, but he had bought them off at a comparatively small price.

Wu Ming-fu's stock-in-trade was quite a contrast to the bulky cargoes of the great caravans. He had no pelts, or yak hair, or camel's wool, or sack of parched barley. His units of trade were more concentrated. His money belt bulged with gold spangles and dust, and he showed us one solid nugget half as big as my fist, the largest I had ever seen. One of his animals had brought out a bushel of musk, a huge leather bag filled with semi-precious stones, a smaller bag containing crude Tibetan silver coins, and a silk-wrapped bundle of carved bone necklaces and phylacteries. These latter objects, made from human bones, are much in demand among good Lamaists, and fetch high prices. His other mule had carried a staggering load of Tibetan bronze—rough images of Buddha and the whole pantheon of Himalayan demonology, heavy bells and horns, metal prayer wheels, libation cups and sacrificial lamps, together with a dozen of the weird "thunderbolts," like miniature dumb-bells, which are the priestly badge of office held in the right hand at all religious ceremonies. Melted up, these bronze curios would yield a high percentage of pure gold and silver.

This cargo represented the sum total of Wu's profits since he had left Chengtu, a year before. In India, he would convert part of it into cash and part into Manchester goods—pen-knives, spectacles, cotton prints, etc.—with which he would return to Tibet in the late summer. Jowar's practical mind appraised the value of Wu's cargo at two hundred pounds sterling—a thousand dollars—representing a very satisfactory profit on a year's work.

The leather bag of turquoises and aquamarines interested me, because my sister was soon to have a birthday, and my father had promised her a necklace. Surely he would get more for his money if he bought from my friend Wu than if he sought his gift in the bazaar. So I arranged with the smiling trader to come out to Simtolah the next day.

When he arrived, he laid out his whole bagful of gems on a mat of black silk on the veranda floor. There were nearly five hundred stones, of a dozen varieties. My sister had expressed a preference for aquamarines, but Wu had a set of thirty pearl-rich moonstones which he recommended with a smile so cheerful and disarming that she instantly decided they were what she wanted.

Wu displayed none of the artful cleverness of the typical Chinese trader on that occasion. When my father asked him the price of the moonstones, I leaned back in my chair, anticipating a half-hour of the usual haggling. But Wu disappointed me. Looking slowly from my father to my sister, he deliberately pushed back first one long sleeve and then the other, paused for the space of four heartbeats, and with a shrug that implied reluctance to accept any money at all from such friends as we, declared that whatever my father chose to pay him would be satisfactory.

My father smilingly accepted the challenge and passed him a paper note whose exact denomination was never revealed to any of us. However, it must have been entirely pleasing to Wu, because before leaving he insisted upon giving each one of us a present—my sister a turquoise pendant, myself and my brother each a handful of crude silver Tibetan coins, and my parents a pair of small bronze Buddhas.

It was on the occasion of our first meeting in the caravan-serai that Wu had startled both Jowar and Chanti with news of certain new developments in Tibet. As usual, Chanti had started out at once to learn the news from the north. It would be filtered on this occasion through a Chinese mind, and Chanti would make the necessary adjustments in reaching his deductions and conclusions. Wu, of course, regarded Tibet as a part of China; Chanti minimized this connection and thought of Tibet, not only as an independent country, but as one which in size and importance would ultimately and inevitably prove its superiority to China or any other Asiatic power.

The Boxer rebellion was still news to this little group of international gossipers at Almorah. Anti-foreign agitation in China had resulted in swift retribution; the Son of Heaven had fled from Peking to Jehol on the border of Lamaist Mongolia—and to Chanti all Mongolia was a part of the future Tibetan Empire. The Russians were marching in Manchuria and menacing the safety of Tibet through the continuing activity at Lhasa of the spy Dorjieff.

It was Wu, however, who brought a new threat to Chanti's attention. Wu was inclined to belittle the aggressions of the Western powers, and even about Russia he showed little concern. But he lost his customary equanimity completely when he spoke of Japan.

"There is our real enemy," he said to Chanti, reviewing the history of Japan's seizure of Formosa and the Pescadores, and the crowning insult to China when Japanese soldiers more recently had stabled their horses in the Temple of Heaven at Peking.

For once Chanti was silenced. Apparently it had never occurred to him that Japan, also, must be considered in planning the future of Tibet. Wu's suggestion opened up a whole new horizon of doubt and danger.

"Can it be possible that those dwarfs would dare to imagine that they can rule their betters?" he suggested finally. His words were more a reflection of his thinking than a question for which he demanded an answer. Into the word "dwarfs" he put all the contempt which he felt for the Japanese. Afterwards, as long as I knew him, he referred to them in that way, and to their soldiers and officers as "monkeys in uniform."

Wu had additional news, still more alarming, about the Japanese. "They have their spies everywhere," he told us. "Even in Tibet."

Chanti shook his head. "Not in Tibet."

"Be not so certain," said Wu earnestly. "There are Japanese in Mongolia, and they have traitorous Chinamen and Mongols in their employ everywhere. . . . But at Lhasa," he continued, after an impressive pause, "there is a Japanese agent, living under the disguise of a Chinese doctor——"

"Do you know this thing to be true?" asked Chanti, more agitated than I had ever seen him.

"I tell only what I have heard from those who speak with every semblance of sincerity," said Wu. "Certainly there is

such a man at Lhasa, who poses as a Chinese—but no Chinese of my acquaintance recognizes him, and he speaks with a suspicious accent.”

For weeks after Wu left for the south, Chanti kept returning to the question of Japan, and the possibility of Japanese designs on Tibet. Jowar had his usual blunt remedy to offer—that England should settle things promptly by pushing into Tibet and establishing its independence under a protectorate, just as she had done in Nepal, Kashmir and Bhutan.

I got pretty muddled by all this adult talk. I was inclined to side with Jowar, whose proposals seemed more immediately practical. I suggested that England could make good use of the Gartok gold fields.

“You are always thinking of the gold,” said Chanti with a tolerant smile. “But there are many other treasures in Tibet, and the gold is not all in Gartok.”

He had a keen realization that an overdose of international politics and rivalries would not help him in his plans for me; so he now laid aside all such deep matters and talked for the rest of that afternoon about things more interesting to me. He was a grand story-teller, and his tales were laid in a background of the great stone monasteries of tremendous height and unheard-of gloom, where lay tons of gleaming stone and heaps of glinting yellow dust. Together we pushed aside the massive bronze-studded doors of these sacred storehouses, and in imagination ran our hands through the treasures there, filling our pockets with things that would surely astound the folks at home on our return.

One of his best stories concerned the “Golden Ghost of Gartok.” It dealt with a mysterious shade which was supposed to guard the treasury of the central monastery of Gartok, through which most of the gold of Eastern Tibet passes. For three hundred years bandits have made repeated attempts to raid its underground storehouses, where thousands of pounds of the yellow metal have reposed. The first, a bandit prince from Afghanistan, disguised himself and his sixty men as ragged pilgrims and won his way into the section of the courtyard set aside for the accommodation of travellers. In the night, they strangled to death the sentinels at the doors, then forced their way into the vaults and packed up

as many bags of gold as sixty men could carry. The leader, staying below until his last man had got safely away, was suddenly felled from behind by a monk who had crept up unnoticed and who used a bag of gold dust as a weapon so effectively that he broke the Afghan's skull with a single blow. Ever since that time, according to the story, the ghost of the Afghan has guarded the shadowy vaults, felling every intruder with bags of gold which he topples silently from the roof of the cavelike rooms.

Another of his stories was of the northern monasteries where gold is so abundant that all the dead incarnations are preserved in a solid plating of it. In one of the monasteries a whole gallery of its departed abbots is to be seen, each one seated in golden splendour, cross-legged on a golden pedestal. Fifteen stone niches, lighted by flickering yak-butter lamps, contain the earthly remains of fifteen incarnations—and according to Lamaist belief they are all the same man! Thirteen is an unlucky number in Tibet, as in other parts of the world, and thirteen years after the thirteenth incarnation died and was placed in the thirteenth niche, there arose a great clamour, for people said that the corpse which had been plated was not that of the abbot. So great was the protest that an ecclesiastical synod was held. After days of deliberation it was announced that a public test would be made. A monk would stick a dagger into the corpse, right through the plating. If blood flowed from the wound, then it would be certain that the corpse was really that of the saint. If no blood came, a mistake had been made and the corpse would be removed from its niche. The monk who was delegated to do the stabbing had been a close friend of the dead abbot, and he felt it would be a great disgrace if the corpse did not successfully pass the test. So the night before the ceremony, he crept into the gallery, cut a hole in the top of the plating and poured in a gourdful of thin red dye. Next morning, at the appointed time, he bravely thrust his knife into the side of the gilded corpse. To the great amazement of the sceptics, and amid exclamations of wonderment from the crowd, a crimson stream spurted forth, which was reverently caught up in a libation cup made from a human skull and placed upon the main altar of the temple, where its dried-up contents still draw hundreds of pilgrims yearly, to the great glory of the monastery and its thirteenth incarnation.

A story that seemed to give Chanti many a quiet chuckle, but which I did not fully understand until I was older, had to do with an enterprising monk in a monastery on the Chinese border. He was a sturdy individual whose personal appearance made him very attractive to the ladies. On his annual vacation period of one month he usually travelled in China, and the shrines which he visited were not those of Lamaism. On several occasions, when returning to the lamasery, he had seen no great harm in bringing back with him a companion, whom he enrolled as an acolyte or probationer. The companion, while dressed as a man, was in fact an alto-voiced Chinese lady with shaven poll and the raiment of a Buddhist priest. Usually the "probationer" would weary of the hospitality of the monastery after a few weeks and drift away. Eventually the priest was summoned to the abbot and charged with infringement of the rules. The abbot was a severe disciplinarian, and he sentenced the priest to a year's solitary confinement in the punishment cells. The monk's latest "probationer" was expelled from the monastery in disgrace. But what the abbot did not know was that the monk's previous "probationer" was still in the monastery, occupying a humble position in the kitchens. She quickly arranged matters so that one of her duties was to deliver the daily ration of buttered tea to the prisoners. The sturdy priest, therefore, had just as good food, and just as comfortable a time, in the prison cell as he had enjoyed in his ordinary quarters above. After a few months, his "warder" assisted him to escape, and they fled together to China.

Wu Ming-fu had been gone for a month before local excitements in Almorah replaced Chanti's consideration of Japan and Russia with matters of more pressing importance. Tension along the border had been increasing, and there were reports that groups of nomad Tibetans, heavily armed, were gathering along the northern trade routes. There was undoubtedly unrest beyond the frontier. Just what it meant nobody knew, but British officials were plainly disturbed.

"It's that rascally Dorjieff," Chanti suggested. "Russia is behind it—inciting a move against England. But it will not amount to anything—it will blow over."

Jowar was of different opinion. There was serious trouble ahead, he was sure, and he even went so far as to advise my

parents to move the family southward, out of the danger zone. They consulted the British authorities and were reassured.

As a result of that reassurance, it came about that I was still in Simtolah when the first of a series of border incidents occurred—incidents which before long were to lead to the launching of an armed British force into Tibet.

It was nearly a month after the first rumours of impending trouble had reached our ears, and we had forgotten our early fears. Early one morning Jowar and I had gone down to the village, to find everywhere an unexpected turmoil. The drums of marching men echoed down from the British barracks on the hillside, and we reached the caravanserai in time to see a column of Gurkhas disappearing northward, followed by a line of supply mules.

We did not wait to get a coherent story of what had happened from the excited villagers, but hurried at once to Chanti's home. We were told that he had been at the custom-house, on the border, since dawn. So we followed the Gurkha column thither, hurrying as best we could down the steep rocky trail which zig-zagged its tree-shaded way along one mountain shelf after another, until it reached the little mountain stream which is the boundary at this point. About 200 soldiers were massed around the rough stone walls of the custom-house, which was located on the farther side of a narrow iron bridge. The column of Gurkhas which had preceded us deployed to the left, up the stream.

The bridge was barred to us by a pair of British tommies, but as they were both acquaintances of mine, Jowar asked them to summon Chanti. While a *chuprassi* (messenger) went to do this, we surveyed the scene in front of us. Beyond the British custom-house was the caravan trail, winding up the mountainside, visible for about a mile before it was lost to view around a rocky shoulder. At a spot no more than 200 yards beyond the border line the trail was now completely blocked by a barricade of rough stones and boulders. Above this barricade were several groups of ragged Tibetans, watching the deliberations which were going on, in front of the British custom-house, between four of their own headmen and a group of natty British officers. Chanti was in the midst of this palaver, squatting on the ground with the Tibetan headmen, interpreting for both sides.

It was characteristic that the Tibetans all spoke from a

sitting position, while the British officers remained standing, or paced back and forth. The argument, whatever it was, seemed to be a heated one, with the Tibetans gesticulating angrily and the Englishmen conferring in whispers and shaking their heads dubiously.

Presently the door of the custom-house opened, and stretcher bearers emerged with two stretchers. A figure on one of the stretchers was covered with a sheet; the other was a uniformed customs official with his head and shoulders wrapped in dozens of yards of bloodstained bandages. As the stretcher bearers carried their burdens to the bridge and thence down the trail toward Almorah, the crowd of Tibetans on the hillsides broke into a wild chorus of taunts and derision.

"Wagh!" exclaimed Jowar, shaking his fist at them as the stretchers passed us. "One man dead, and another badly wounded. That will surely be taken seriously by England." He frowned gravely. "Those ignorant Tibetans know not what they are doing."

"Does it mean war?" I asked him.

Jowar paused a long time before answering. "Who knows?" he said finally, and his manner of saying it convinced me that he regarded the matter as something likely to shake the peace of nations.

In a moment or two he went on: "If this were just an ordinary border rumpus, there would be nothing to worry about. But when the Tibetans gather on the hillside and assail the British Raj with taunts and insults, there is more in it than can be settled with an arrest and an apology."

He pointed over at the conference, growing momentarily more heated. "The headmen are defiant," he observed, as their staccato voices reached us across the stream. "Look, Chanti is joining the English officers!"

That this indicated a complete failure to reach any agreement was shown a moment later, when the Tibetan headmen rose sullenly and started off to rejoin their followers on the hillside.

"They are stubborn dogs," growled Jowar.

We waited a long quarter-hour before Chanti finally joined us and accompanied us back up the trail, explaining the whole incident as he walked. At daybreak the Tibetans had been seen gathered along the trail, rolling stones and boulders into place to form a barricade which would close the road to the

caravans and merchants. The two customs officers who were on duty at the time had gone over to protest, and had been immediately set upon by the Tibetans. Both of them had been able to get back to the custom-house, but one died shortly after from his wounds and the other would probably not survive.

The British troops had come out from Almorah and had called upon the Tibetan headmen to surrender those responsible for the outrage. But the headmen had refused either to act against the culprits or to remove the barrier from the road. Such an attitude was unprecedented: it involved a defiance of Britain that, unless met promptly, would result in serious loss of prestige all along the border.

Chanti was sure that the incident would not be overlooked by the British. For the moment the local officials would mark time, awaiting instructions from the provincial capital at Naini Tal, the Indian capital at Darjeeling, and perhaps even from Downing Street. Already, no doubt, the wires from Almorah to Naini Tal were throbbing with the news; before nightfall, Darjeeling and London would know of the day's happenings. Meanwhile, the border would be put under strict martial law.

"There is something more than a mere isolated happening in this," Chanti said. "Other bands of misguided Tibetans were out last night. For many miles down the frontier they overturned the old boundary stones, which—here, at least—have stood untouched, unharmed, unchallenged since the Treaty of eighteen-ninety."

I recalled the scores of these stones which I had seen in my horseback rides around Simtolah. They were white pyramids of rough rock and mortar, four feet high and broadly based, placed at regular intervals along the treaty line by British surveyors of nearly a generation before. The overturning of these stones was a deliberate insult to Britain and a definite denunciation of a boundary which had, of course, never been accepted by Tibet.

During the months that followed, the border country never regained its old tranquillity. Our frontier bristled with troops, and warlike manoeuvres went on ostentatiously, continuously, all around Almorah. The frontier valleys reverberated with the booming of screw-gun batteries and cannisters at target practice, and every open space echoed with the crackle of

small arms as soldiers marched and countermarched in sham battle.

Yet the British Government made no definite move against Tibetan marauders. The Almorah incident was permitted to fade out, with the blot on British prestige unavenged. This puzzled Jowar, to whom British inaction in the face of such happenings was a paradox.

Chanti, however, never criticized the British for inactivity. "There is plenty going on under the surface, my dear Jowar," he would say, "and in the long run it will be more effective than haphazard punishment of every little hothead."

We saw less and less of Chanti as the summer progressed. He was constantly occupied with his mysterious semi-official business for the British Raj. His house was a centre for conferences of Nepalese and Tibetan strangers, and he became a frequent visitor at the home of the officer commanding the Almorah garrison.

He had a week of comparative idleness about the time Wu Ming-fu came back, ready to re-enter Tibet on the return journey to his homeland. He accompanied the Chinese trader on a ceremonial visit to our home at Simtolah, the purpose of which was to bring my mother and sister farewell gifts of bazaar sweetmeats. The gifts were an expression of his feeling that my father's purchase of his moonstones, being his first transaction in India, had brought him good luck. Wu was dressed in new padded clothes, and looked well-fed and happy.

I was allowed that day to accompany him back to Almorah and through the long afternoon Chanti, Jowar and I sat with him around his fire in the caravanserai.

The Chinese merchant now had four fine new pack animals, and a load of trade goods that indicated his cheerful belief in the success of his approaching trek across the Hermit Kingdom.

One of his animals carried nothing but spectacles—box after box of cheap steel frames set with every possible combination of lenses. I have never, before or since, seen such a collection of spectacles. Chanti poked a good deal of sly fun at this merchandise.

"You will have every man, woman and child in Tibet wearing glasses," he told the merchant.

Wu protested soberly that he had less than six thousand

pairs, all told. "And they are only for students," he insisted with a twinkle.

"But there aren't six thousand students in all Tibet," Chanti insisted.

Finally Wu told us the real reason for his heavy stock of spectacles. The purchasers of spectacles were the monks in the lamaseries. Their eyes all went bad, comparatively early in life, he said, from the necessity of poring over their 108 books of Lamist scripture by the light of smoking yak-butter lamps.

"Most of the monks in Tibet are half blind" he asserted, with a wave of the hand. "But I'm not so much concerned with their blindness, as with the fact that they pay me always in gold. On this trip I want gold, not goods. It may be my last journey across Tibet—for I'm not as young as I used to be and the tablets of my ancestors on the farm at Chengtu are ever calling me. If it is my last journey, I want to take out something that will carry me through my old age in comfort. Gold is, after all, the best of all commodities."

His mention of the fact that the monks always paid him in gold stirred me to ask him where and how they got their gold. It was a subject which continued to fascinate me—the gold of Tibet. Wu entertained me for an hour with stories of the treasures he had seen or known about, in the interior.

One great monastery which he had visited only a few months before, and to which he was planning to return now with his mule-load of Sheffield spectacles, was to his mind the richest in all the region north-west of Mount Everest. Located at an altitude of 18,000 feet, it had seven thousand monks, housed in one enormous stone building sixteen stories high. The monastery hugged the base of a sugar-loaf rock whose top was in the clouds. Two thousand feet below its gates lay the caravan trail to Tashilhunpo, home of the Panchan Lama. The Panchan counted this as one of his most important lamaseries, with storehouses bulging with treasure that had been accumulating for eight hundred years.

"There is more gold in that monastery than the Son of Heaven has in Peking," said Wu. His phrasing was equivalent to an Englishman comparing its wealth to that of the Bank of England.

Wu explained to me that much of the astounding financial

strength of the monasteries comes from their banking operations. They lend money to their followers in the surrounding countryside, for financing crops and purchases; then they collect interest on a standard basis of two per cent a month. In a few hundred years, the compounding of such interest gives them complete control of the wealth of their district.

A note of unexplained sadness came into our parting with Wu, a few days later. It was not only that he had himself suggested it might be his last visit to India. Both Jowar and Chanti seemed to feel that conditions would never again be right for trading with far-off China—at least not for many years. The frontier troubles of the summer were always heavy on their minds and hearts, together with a feeling that things would grow progressively worse.

Our farewell meeting was a touching one. The voices of the three friends were low and sad. For an hour they discussed the relations of their respective countries. "Why cannot our countries be friends, even as we three are friends?" Wu suggested. And Chanti, out of the store of his thoughtful philosophy, tried to answer him.

"Countries are different, somehow," he said. "Individuals can be friends, even though they are rivals in business, in politics or in love. But countries can never long be friends. By the time you reach China she may be an enemy of my beloved Tibet. Russia is already our enemy, though at Lhasa she simulates the countenance of friendship. England is our truest friend—England and India—but they, against their will, may soon be forced to put on the armour of war against us."

We said good-bye to Wu in the caravanseraï. He and his four well-laden animals disappeared into the dust beyond the gates of the inn. We gave him a last wave of the hand and murmured Godspeed, each in his own way, then turned back to the dying embers of his fire to wonder whether, ever again, we would see his genial countenance.

CHAPTER THREE

THE KIM-MEN SPY OUT THE LAND

Stones are friends, they help one slay
People who are in the way.
No one quite so dead as he
Who's been stoned efficiently.

—Yumba Proverb

IT was soon after Wu's departure that, through a very unusual circumstance, I went to live in Chanti's home for a period of several weeks, surrounded by all the care and attention that would have been bestowed upon me if I had been his son. It was my first realization that the declared relationship between us—that of *guru* and *chela*—carried exactly this implication.

My stay with Chanti came about through a bad burn which I suffered while helping Jowar to cook his noonday meal. A kettle of deep fat was accidentally overturned and a quantity of the hot grease reached my right knee as I squatted beside the outdoor stove. The result was a deep burn, the scar of which I still bear, marked with the ribs of the woollen stockings I was wearing at the time.

Jowar and the servants gave me first-aid treatment to the best of their ability, with oil and ointments, and I was put to bed in an agony of pain, unable to move the leg without unbearable torture. There is so little fleshy covering over the bones of the knee that a deep burn is likely to prove stubborn and difficult; by the second day it was obvious that I was a very sick boy, with the poison from the injury setting up an inflammation that might spread to my whole body.

My parents were deeply concerned, and it was decided that I should be taken in to Almorah, so that I could be treated by the British military doctor there. Chanti, who was even more agitated over my accident than my parents, urged that I be taken to his home rather than to the hospital. He pointed out that his house was close to the doctor's quarters, and

that I would have the advantage of the constant care of his womenfolk, under surroundings far pleasanter than the bare boards of the barracks hospital.

It was thus that I found myself lying on a thick yak-wool quilt in the zenana of Chanti's home. The women's quarters occupied half of the second floor of the three-storied house. That I should be even permitted in these rooms was an exceptional arrangement, justified only by visualizing the bond between Chanti and myself as equivalent to the relationship between father and son. Even the military doctor could not enter there; when he came for his daily call, I was carried into the reception room on the other side of the house. As for the visits of my own family, my mother and sister could, of course, go into the women's rooms, but my father and brother must see me in the reception hall.

Chanti, in his living, had made a compromise between Indian and Tibetan customs. In his homeland women were not secluded. But out of deference to his many Mohammedan and Hindu visitors, he had found himself forced to adopt their rigorous rules and put his womenfolk "behind the curtain."

In matters of religion, Chanti's beliefs were liberal in the extreme. Although he maintained a Tibetan shrine in a little cubicle beyond the guest room, where the women went whenever they wished and squatted cross-legged to pray before the bronze image of Buddha on a lotus pedestal, Chanti used the cubicle for meditation rather than for worship. His attitude toward religion was eclectic: all religions are good, and Hindus, Mohammedans and Christians are all followers of the Law, each in their own peculiar way.

In the atmosphere of his own home, Chanti's talks with me became more confidential and comprehensive than ever before. He no longer made any attempt to hide from me the fact that the numerous visitors received in his house, especially during the hours of darkness, were bearers of information that was being gleaned in a hundred devious ways for the protection of the uneasy border.

As my burn slowly healed, and I began to hobble painfully about the house, he encouraged me to spend the evening hours with him, seated beside him on a slightly raised platform in the corner of the reception room, where he would smoke away at his bubbling hookah, while a shadowy servant served

the strangely varied guests with buttered tea, or almonds and cardamoms. Always he would introduce me as "my son," with implications that there were no secrets between him and me and that the business in hand was as much my concern as his. This was an extraordinary attitude for him to take, because the matters under discussion were frequently of great import, and a little babbling on my part would have brought swift harm, not only to Chanti but to others whose lives were in constant jeopardy.

A strange mixture of tongues was heard under the flickering oil lamps of that dim-lit room, and I often fell asleep on my silk-covered cushions under the hypnotic effect of long conversations in strange Nepalese and Tibetan dialects which were no more than jibberish to me. Mostly, however, the talk was in Hindustani or the familiar Tibetan of Almorah, and it had to do with events and data of various kinds from beyond the border.

I had read Kipling's *Kim*, and I recognized that Chanti's work was somehow a part of that same far-flung activity of the British Intelligence Service. I mentally catalogued some of Chanti's visitors as "Kim-men," carefully trained to penetrate the hidden fastnesses of the Forbidden Land and bring back geographical and political material for the information and guidance of the Great Ones at Darjeeling and Downing Street.

For more than twenty years this work had been going on, until British maps of Tibet had begun to bear all the infinite details that are needed before an army can move safely into the Unknown—distances measured and remeasured by the methodical counting of footsteps on a rosary, mountain passes charted secretly on the brown paper of a pseudo-pilgrim's prayer wheel, temperatures, altitudes and compass bearings surreptitiously recorded from tiny instruments carried in Tibetan pen cases at the risk of the owner's life.

Every one of these visitors to Chanti's house was a mystery and a romance. In the books of the Raj, they were probably only numbers; or, more frequently, the messengers of men who were only numbers. Often, indeed, they had no realization of the meaning of the information they brought. Code terms were used, employing business and religious jargon for the transmission of highly dangerous data. A messenger who brought news one night of the price of camels

in Lhasa, apparently a routine bit of market information, came nearer to upsetting Chanti's customary impassivity than any visitor I had seen. Chanti inquired almost eagerly as to the source of his information, questioning him and cross-examining him as if the price of camels in Lhasa were the most important matter in the world.

When the man, an ignorant Nepalese muleteer who had just come down from the north with a caravan, had departed I questioned Chanti.

"Why such a fever about the price of camels?" I asked.

Chanti was nervously fingering a button of his black coat. He looked at me enigmatically.

"The price of camels in Lhasa?" he repeated. "I suspect it may be regarded by the British Raj as the most serious news we have received since I came to Almorah."

I watched him as he filled in a telegraph blank, addressing it to a "professor" in Darjeeling who was his liaison for communicating highly dangerous information to the Intelligence Department. Twice he consulted a code book from a locked cabinet in the wall, before he was satisfied that his telegram could not possibly be understood by any chance reader.

I was agog with curiosity, but I had learned that sometimes it was better to wait silently for Chanti to explain, rather than to importune him. Finally he told me what the excitement was all about.

"The price of camels in Lhasa," he said slowly, "means that a shipment of Russian rifles has arrived at the Potala, the palace of the Dalai Lama. England can no longer be in doubt. Russia has finished with merely talking—this is action!"

In less than twenty days this information had come down from Lhasa to the border. The Kim-men were on the job, just as they had been for a generation, ever since the first work of preparing British maps of the forbidden north country had been started.

Chanti had been one of the originators of this system of frontier espionage, back in his early days of government service. His younger brother, Taranatha, one of the original Kim-men, was educated especially for this service with a thorough grounding in surveying, simple geology and mineralogy, and the use of certain scientific instruments.

This was supplemented by a postgraduate course in quickness of eye, head and hand, under "The Persian" in Simla; by a study of costumes and dialects; by training in various systems of self-defence. Taranatha was one of a class of twenty Tibetan and Nepalese youths who had gone into Tibet to spy out the land, disguised as coolies, animal drivers, pilgrims or personal servants. Out of the whole twenty, only ten survived to collect a generous pension from the Indian government at the end of their prescribed term of service.

Taranatha was not one of the lucky ones. For three short years he had walked over Tibetan highlands, counting every single step he took, 3700 miles in all. And then he died, discovered by his own race, who on fear of death to themselves and their families must expose spies.

Chanti told me a story of Taranatha's death one evening when there were no visitors to distract us. "My brother's investigations in Tibet," he said, "had been mainly in the gold fields, and his instructions were not only to map the country and trade routes, but to bring back specimens of ore for analysis as to their content of gold, silver, mercury and other metals. Every river in Tibet flows over gold-bearing sands, and the weather-beaten cliffs of the river sources are the cradle from which this gold has been brought by centuries of flowing water. The great gold fields of Tibet are around Gartok, east of Yamdok Lake, along the Yunan border, and on the Mongolian plateaux at the edge of the Gobi Desert.

"Taranatha had been working in a completely unmapped area east of Gartok, and he came into the monastery of Tugugompa, on Lake Manasarowar, to meet a messenger who would take out for him the accumulated results of his recent studies. The messenger was a Hindu pilgrim who had come to Tugugompa with a large body of the faithful to worship at the source of Indus River, sacred to all Hindus. Taranatha, disguised as a young lama, took quarters in the little monastery and waited several days for the pilgrims to arrive, ingratiating himself with the thirteen resident monks by his devoutness and his knowledge of their scriptures.

"Finally the pilgrimage arrived, and Taranatha delivered to his messenger the ore specimens that he had hidden in the folds of his cloak and the topographical reports accumulated in his prayer wheel. He was leaving the monastery when

another of the pilgrims, a youth from Naini Tal who had been a schoolmate of Taranatha, recognized him and spoke to him in Urdu, carelessly referring to their schooldays and expressing a natural but unfortunate surprise at seeing my brother here, in the dress of a priest.

"The remark was overheard and the news spread like wild-fire through the whole column of pilgrims, eventually coming to the ears of the guard of Tibetan soldiers who had accompanied the pilgrimage through the mountains."

Chanti paused and sought solace in his hookah. But its fire had gone out, and he signalled to the servant to bring a fresh coal for its relighting. This done, he took a few deep puffs of the fragrant smoke; then, with an effort, he resumed his story.

"Where was I? Oh, yes, Taranatha fled, hoping to find shelter among the Yumba nomads who are gold washers in the region east of Gartok. But the chase was on—there was no shelter.

"The Yumbas seized him, bound him with cords of yak hide, and held him prisoner, without food or water, until the soldiers arrived.

"Perhaps the soldiers were afraid: I don't know. They would have nothing to do with the prisoner. They ordered the Yumbas to kill him.

"So he was carried, bound, to a neighbouring chorten and thrown down helpless on its rocky surface, underneath the painted figures of a hundred Buddhas."

The chorten is a pyramid of rocks, at the entrance to a ravine or pass, built up through hundreds of years by travellers, each of whom prayerfully adds a rock to the pile in order to propitiate the local devil. Close by the chorten, devout passers-by often pause to carve or paint a figure of the Lord Buddha on near-by cliffs.

Chanti went on with his tale of Taranatha: "These mountain nomads are pitiless, cruel. Doubtless Taranatha pleaded with them to kill him quickly, by gun or knife. But that is not their way. The hurled stone is their invariable method of executing sentence of death.

"And it was so that they carried out the soldiers' orders. Stone after stone, thrown from twenty paces—until the mutilated body of Taranatha was all but buried in them. . . . It is not a pleasant death."

Chanti returned to his hookah. But his tale was not yet done. A few puffs and he resumed:

"The soldiers returned with his clothes to the monastery, and the story of the death of a 'foreign spy' was recited in great detail to the pilgrims, as an example of what would also befall them if they failed to observe the unwritten law that visitors to Tibet must never overstep the bounds of their mission of prayer and worship."

Chanti told the tale simply and in an even voice. But the unwonted slowness of his speech and his selection of uncommonly dignified words indicated the deep feeling that lay behind his brief recital. After a long pause, which I felt I should not break by any of the many questions I wanted to ask about Gartok and the gold there, he went to a little teak-wood cabinet that stood against the wall and drew out a lacquer box containing his only souvenirs of his brother—a leather-bound volume of the *Child's History of England*, given to Taranatha as a school prize; a silver cup, won as a sprinter in school games; a bronze medal presented posthumously by the British government.

Chanti was proud of Taranatha's contribution to the world's knowledge of the Gartok district. "Not a single one of the geographical facts which he reported has ever been challenged as to its accuracy," said Chanti. "The distances he paced off were exact to the last rod; the altitudes he figured from the temperature of boiling water are as accurate as if he had been equipped with scientific instruments; the compass directions he recorded are the basis for every map that now exists; the courses of streams and rivers are as he wrote them down on the brown coiled paper inside his prayer wheel."

I could withhold my questionings no longer. "And the gold?" I asked. "Is it there?"

Chanti smiled tolerantly. "No doubt about it, my son. Gartok is one of the richest gold fields of the world, and the opening of it to trade and commerce is perhaps the most important project to be taken up by the British with the Dalai Lama in Lhasa. With machinery, and transport, it will build for Western Tibet both power and wealth."

Most of our talks, during the hours that I spent alone with Chanti, had to do with the political destiny of Tibet. Chanti never ceased to dream of a lama empire in Central Asia, strong,

wealthy and internationally powerful, a fit successor to the empires created in ancient times by Attila, Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. It took a bold man, in this day and age, to dream of such great things.

To Chanti the mighty nations of the north and east were the enemies of his homeland. China he regarded as a weakling, decadent and rotten at the core. Russia he paid the compliment of hating and fearing.

Economically he hoped for a linking of England and Tibet, and Russia was the stumbling-block in the way of any such plan.

Now and then he would revert suddenly to Wu's warning against the ambitious Japanese. He hated those "dwarfs" as only one Oriental can hate another. He considered them upstarts—they were so new to his thinking that he found it hard to believe they might prove dangerous. But he had been making many inquiries about them, and had suddenly begun reading avidly every line of Japanese news that came in his newspaper, the *Pioneer*, from Allahabad, his college town.

In its columns he found many significant items, over which he meditated and pondered, seeking to learn their meaning. The ships of the Russian Grand Fleet had lately come around Asia, through the Suez Canal, to cruise majestically southward, back and forth, from their base at Port Arthur. This surely was a sign that Russia took the Japanese menace seriously. And Japan seemed not a whit overawed by Russia's pomposity.

"Japan is barking like a little dog at the heels of the Russian bear," Chanti would say. "How do they dare to do it? They are not brave men, like the Tibetans, who care not what odds are against them. They are cowardly gamblers, who bet only on a certainty. Can it be that they know of some hidden weakness in their big opponent?"

Then he would let his thoughts drift away to the possible effect on Tibet of a conflict between Russia and Japan. "If it will weaken Russia, or divert her attention from Lhasa, it is good," he decided.

Many of his talks with me were centred on England's probable future policy in Tibet. His attitude toward the British was a mixed one; he admired their sturdy fixity of purpose, but he despised their blundering method of dealing with border problems as if all peoples had Anglo-Saxon minds. I have seen him holding his hand over his nose when passing

red-coated tommies in Almorah's tiny bazaar—an insulting thing for a semi-official employee of the Intelligence Service to do. But it was a symbolic gesture, signifying his disagreement with the use of force to solve Anglo-Tibetan problems. He was a man of peace, and the daily evidence of warlike preparations along the frontier alarmed him.

These preparations were due, according to Chanti's way of thinking, to fear in England of the hold Russia was getting on Lhasa and the Dalai Lama, through the aggressive diplomacy of Dorjjeff.

The news which had come to us of the arrival of Russian rifles in Lhasa acted like an electric spark on Darjeeling and Downing Street. Even in Almorah the quickening of the British pulse could be felt: all along the frontier there were military activities which could only mean that England was getting ready to strike at Russia through Tibet.

Chanti felt that this was the wrong strategy. Dorjjeff would hang himself by his own rope; he would promise more than he could deliver, and Russia would quickly be disgraced and discountenanced. So Chanti predicted, urging the advisability of patience and toleration on the part of England.

But his policy was not the policy of Downing Street. By the time I was ready to leave Chanti's house, my burned leg quite well healed but still bandaged against any accidental infection, the panoply of war was evident in Almorah.

The great barracks on the hill, which had been only half occupied for many years, were now filled to their utmost capacity with veteran troops fresh from the Afghan frontier. Down in the town every unoccupied house or building had been taken over by the hangers-on and flotsam-jetsam that always accompanies native soldiers in India—providers of drink and entertainment, sellers of souvenirs and knick-knacks, exploiters of nautch girls who ply their trade after dark to the piping flutes and the throb of drums.

In the barracks yards were two long lines of shiny new guns, Armstrong howitzers with dark green caissons loaded with ugly 4.5. shells. The picket lines were crowded with Missouri mules, a fresh consignment from America.

In the bazaars and down the single street of the town were contrasting groups of soldiers from far-off places, with the swashbuckling manner which characterizes an army as soon as talk of actual warfare begins to fill the air.

THE PANCHAN LAMA AT FIFTY

(Illustration facing page 48)

As the reincarnation of Buddha, he holds a position which is religiously the highest in the Tibetan theocracy. He was born the son of a woodchopper so poor and so obscure that even his name is now forgotten. Miracles which accompanied his birth identified him as the reincarnation of God. At the age of weaning—four years in Tibet—he was taken from his mother and formally installed as ruler of the priest-city of Tashilhunpo. For thirteen years, while regents ruled, he was trained in the holy ritual, memorizing all of the 108 books of Lamaist scripture. Then, at eighteen, he was installed on his yellow satin throne.

HE PRAYS FOR HIS FOLLOWERS

(Illustration facing page 49)

This unusual photograph shows the Panchan Lama in the act of blessing several hundred stalks of "longevity grass," which are later to be distributed to an immense audience of pilgrims and converts. This peculiar kusha grass is grown in temple courtyards throughout Tibet, carefully nurtured and cared for by specially delegated monks and acolytes. A single stalk of it—when properly blessed by the Supreme Pontiff, the reincarnation of the Lord Buddha himself—has the power of prolonging the life of the recipient far beyond his allotted span. The act of blessing it is an elaborate rite. The stalks of grass must be moved through certain symbolic mudras (conventionalized gestures), to the accompaniment of choral intonations, which give it the property of warding off evil spirits. The pontiff's left hand always holds the golden "bell" which is the female element as symbolized in Lamaism. Invisible, but held in the right hand, is the phallic "thunderbolt" of Tibetan gold, which symbolizes the male element.





Meanwhile, along the frontier, there was a bristling of soldiers such as Almorah had not known for many a long year. Astride the caravan trail, at the custom-house, was a whole company of the King's Own Rifles, housed in a city of brown tents. The newest and most obvious development since my previous visit, however, was a telegraph line, extending from a "message centre" at the custom-house, east and west down the frontier, to every outpost and sentry station. Strung on bamboo poles, the telegraph wire was a potent evidence of definite preparation for some immediately impending threat.

Off on the hills somewhere, perhaps on the boundary of Nepal, could be seen the flicker of a heliograph, ticking off its light-borne messages.

CHAPTER FOUR

MULES, YAKS AND MEN

Yaks provide our leather, meat,
Butter, wool—no minor feat.
Why they do this much for Man
None will say, for no one can.

—*Dang-la Folk Song*

MY favourite spot in Almorah during the early part of that busy summer was the picket line where the newly arrived Missouri mules were tethered. I suppose I was drawn to them because they were countrymen of mine, a living link with the land which seemed so far away, so different, and so superior to the one in which I found myself.

There is something about a line of Missouri mules that merits anybody's interest and attention. Those purchased by the British quartermaster's department for duty at Almorah were superb and select animals, large in size, sleek of coat, uniform in their chestnut colour, trim black legs and polished black hoofs. Their faces fascinated me, and I came to agree with the native syces (hostlers) that a mule's mind could be read by the expression of his flopping ears, his plastic nostrils, his innocent eyes and his mobile mouth.

I had many arguments with the syces about their method of tethering my fellow-countrymen, for it seemed to me that the heel ropes were uncomfortable and unnecessary. Each mule had not only an ordinary army halter, by which he was roped to the picket rail, but also two ten-foot heel ropes tied from his hind legs to a pair of wooden stakes about twelve feet apart. These ropes pulled the hind legs apart, and gave the animal an awkward appearance on the picket line. I argued with the syces that if I were a mule, I wouldn't like it. Their answer was that if I actually were a mule, I *would* like it.

They would take me around to the head of a tethered mule and ask him frankly, in affectionate Hindustani, to decide our controversy. I must admit that in practically every case the mule either nodded or made a face which the syces interpreted as an agreement with their viewpoint. It seemed to me, however, slightly unfair to test a Missouri mule with an inquiry in a language so remote from that of his native soil.

Within a week after their arrival, every one of those Missouri mules had been given an exalted Indian name. The syces vied with one another in finding titles that would adequately reflect all the virtues which they claimed for their particular charges. Names of the great rajahs and princes were freely bestowed, together with those of the most important gods and prophets of various religions. The roll call of the mules would have served H. G. Wells as an index for an "Outline of Indian History." It would have shown clearly the most important contacts of ancient times between India and the Western World. Mules named for Plato and Socrates told of Alexander the Great's invasion of India. Mules named Solomon and Moses reflected the Semitic influence. Mules named Akhbar, Shah Jehan and Jehangir spoke of Mongolia and Persia. Female mules bore such titles as Queen of Sheba, Jezebel, or Sitaram, the Brahman goddess.

The Missouri mules seemed to like their new titles, and I quickly learned to know most of them by name. The new arrivals were brigaded with a number of veterans, who generally became the "lead" mules for the squads of four animals, with about five of these squads to a "unit" of transport. Training of the rookies came as part of the ordinary routine of carrying supplies to the frontier outposts for a hundred miles up and down the border. In a single file, the mule units would set out, the lead mule in front, with the halter of Number Two tied to his pack saddle, Number Three similarly fastened to Number Two, and so on.

On my daily visits to the mule line, I soon learned that I was not the only person who found this spot a centre of interest. Almost every afternoon groups of British officers were to be seen sauntering up and down there, discussing the merits and demerits of my four-footed countrymen. Not merely transport officers, but also representatives of other services, and even

numerous gold-braided and brass-hatted persons from brigade headquarters.

They had heated discussions as to the possibility and advisability of using mules in the Tibetan mountains. Many of the higher officers felt that mules would fail completely in any prolonged expedition into the uplands, because of the altitude, the intense cold and the lack of forage. Others defended the mules, basing their arguments on past performance in warfare on the north-west frontier.

It was well known, of course, that the Chinese traders used mules successfully in crossing Tibet. But a group of two or three mules is a different matter from five hundred or a thousand. Whether the country would support hundreds of these animals, in a concentrated troop movement, was an important question.

Bullock transport, which was widely used on the plains, was generally regarded as impossible in Tibet, although it had its advocates along the picket lines at Almorah.

Gradually, however, a new school of thought began to gain the ascendancy, advocating the use of yaks. The yak is the Tibetan beast of burden, used almost exclusively by the natives wherever altitudes exceed 8000 feet. In appearance the yak resembles the American bison or buffalo, although it is shorter in stature, heavier in the hindquarters, and has thicker, longer and silkier wool, covering its whole body. It is more deliberate and peaceful in its movements than the buffalo, but has a more formidable appearance owing to the heavy "feathers" of long hair on its dewlap and fetlocks.

As a beast of burden it has certain definite merits in a high and mountainous country. It is easily domesticated; it carries a heavy load; it is absolutely sure-footed; it endures easily the hardships of cold, wind and weather; it can find its own forage in the bleakest country. For the Tibetans, it has the additional merit of providing butter, wool, leather, meat and even building material—the latter in the universal use of yak horns and bones as a revetment for walls of mud houses. The yak is found wild in all parts of the Tibetan highlands, and is also bred in the villages.

The British General Staff, contemplating the possibility of an expedition into Tibet, was now considering seriously the formation of a yak transport division. This seemed to many of the experienced officers the only solution for the difficulty

of providing forage for a troop movement which might have to push many hundreds of miles from its base, over the most difficult mountain trails in the world.

One summer day I found Chanti preparing to leave on a long journey. He explained that he would be gone for at least a month, having been assigned to negotiate the purchase of a thousand yaks from the Yumba nomads.

Jowar and I sat with him in the courtyard of his home, while the two servants who were to accompany him loaded his two pack mules and saddled his pony. Chanti was in Tibetan costume, wearing a single plum-coloured garment of homespun yak wool, which might be called either a robe or a kimono, so voluminous that it needed neither trousers nor shirt. Bound at the waist with a broad red girdle, it was bloused above the middle into folds so ample that much of the travellers's baggage—food bowl, pen case, spectacles and notebooks—could be carried conveniently in these impromptu pockets.

There was great argument between Jowar and Chanti over the purchase of yaks by the British. To Jowar, the whole proposition was ridiculous: he had been listening to the syces in the mule lines and knew every frailty of yaks. Chanti, however, was a strong supporter of the Tibetan beast of burden. While he wanted no war between England and Tibet and still hoped it would be averted, he felt that a yak transport division would prove a bond of union, commercial and otherwise, between India and his native land.

As for me, I was torn between my loyalty to the mules and my interest in the novel idea of organized yak transport. Most of all, however, I longed to accompany Chanti into the mysterious north-west. The country of the Yumba nomads was on the threshold of the Gartok gold fields; these nomads were the very ones who had stoned Taranatha to death; Chanti would see many new and strange things.

I even asked Chanti if he would not delay his departure until I could get permission from my parents to go with him. He smiled, even pondered a little over the possibility. But finally he shook his head and insisted that it was not possible.

"But," he conceded, "I shall return in four or five weeks, and I will telegraph Jowar from Loharinaig Falls. Then you

can both ride out two or three days along the road, and come back with me, if you wish."

"Perhaps you can bring me a small nugget from Gartok to add to my collection," I suggested.

Chanti patted my shoulder fondly, and promised to do it if he could.

The month that passed before we heard from Chanti was filled with rumours of war. Reticence was the prevailing note among the British officers, but the bazaar was alive each day with fantastic tales of what was supposed to be going on at distant points along the 1000-mile frontier. Little shopkeepers, whose total stock in trade seldom exceeded \$25, were kept busy, packing and unpacking, as the rumours veered from peace to war and back again. Whenever outpost replacements left the barracks, a buzz of gossip would start, reporting some new border incident of shocking import, all of which would be denied again before the last soldier of the marching column was out of sight.

Jowar and I, riding our horses about the countryside, visited several British outposts and talked with the tommies stationed there. Eager for war, most of them were willing to draw upon their imaginations for bloodcurdling yarns of spies and threatened attacks. They relieved the boredom of their long night vigils by picturing bearded Russians and bow-legged Japanese lurking behind distant rocks and trees.

When Chanti's summons came, Jowar and I set out along the western trails for the distant meeting place which he had appointed. This was a village under the shadow of Nanda Devi, a 25,000-foot peak whose mauve-pink crest was clearly visible from our home at Simtolah. We covered eighty miles on our shaggy hill ponies in the next three days, and then waited a day in the postman's hut in the village before Chanti appeared.

I was disappointed that he was not accompanied by at least a few of the thousand yaks he had set out to purchase. He had left them behind, he explained, in Tiri, where they had been met by the B.T.O.'s (Bullock Train Officers) sent on from Simla.

Chanti had actually purchased only a few hundred yaks, but he had arranged for the driving in of many more, and

army officers had now authorized the purchase of three thousand of them, to be distributed for training and observation at a dozen places along the border.

"The experiment will be a complete failure," he said gloomily. "These B.T.O.'s from the plains know less than nothing about yaks. They have brought currycombs and brushes, as if the yaks could be sent to a barber shop. And they insist on using down-country fodder—I don't know what the result will be—either the yaks will die from this too-rich diet or they will get so full of energy that they will wreck the camp."

I knew something about yaks—a very little—from having seen them on rare occasions in Almorah, coming down in groups of four or five with a load of wool or borax from the uplands. They were never kept in the courtyard of the caravanserai, for yaks cannot be mixed with mules or ponies. Being grazing animals, they were usually turned loose outside the town, on some grassy slope, with three or four of the drivers' dogs left to watch them and keep their sluggish movements within reasonable bounds.

They had a wicked reputation among the Indian population of Almorah, who regarded them as dangerous and ferocious animals, "full of Tibetan devils." This attitude was strangely at variance with that of the villagers who were of Tibetan blood. The latter had no more fear of a yak than of a chicken: I have often seen a diminutive Tibetan boy go up to a giant yak, armed with an ordinary wooden stick, and with impunity give the animal a clout on the nose that would have been resented by the most peaceful American cow.

Chanti arrived at our meeting place late in the afternoon, and we were content to await the morrow before starting homeward. We prepared our evening meal in the postman's hut, and ate it on the small terrace under the stars. The peak of Nanda Devi brooded above us to the westward, a giant shadowy ghost with a white head that seemed phosphorescent in the last high rays of the setting sun which had already left the lower world. Around us the evening smoke-mist from the village fires hung in wisps and layers, perfumed by the persistent odour of wild mint and thyme. As a musical accompaniment to our meal we had the song of a mountain stream as it splashed its way over the granite boulders in its

tempestuous course to the valley thousands of feet below. From across the stream, where a wooded hillside rose abruptly, came occasionally the hoarse cough of a little barking deer as it sought its food among the feathers of the mountain bamboo.

While we talked, I held in my hand the irregularly shaped nugget of Gartok gold which Chanti, true to his word, had brought me. It was about half the size of a dime, crystalline in appearance, and except in weight and colour much like the tiny pieces of lava I had often picked up on the slopes of Mount Cheena, near Naini Tal.

Chanti was full of his experiences with the yaks. Everything had gone well until the B.T.O.'s arrived.

"The first thing they did was to get out their little books of army regulations," he explained acidly. "Yaks to them were nothing but a new kind of bullock. They were shocked at the dirty appearance of my animals, not knowing that a yak's smell and his matted wool are a sign of health and soundness."

At this particular season of the year, the yak is losing his shaggy coat and invariably presents a ratty, moth-eaten appearance. The new winter wool is already forming, and as it grows it pushes out last year's coat, which hangs in shreds.

Before the arrival of the B.T.O.'s, Chanti had herded his purchases on an island in an unnamed mountain stream. For fodder they had an ample supply of lichen and moss, shrubs and nettles; for water they could go at will to the edge of the island.

Hither had come the B.T.O.'s with a squad of *byle-wallas* (bullock drivers). At the appearance of the down-country men, the Yumbas that Chanti had employed as caretakers disappeared.

First of all, the B.T.O.'s erected picket lines for the yaks, in accordance with the printed regulations for bullocks. The bewildered yaks submitted, none too graciously. Then began an orgy of currycombing, which looked like an endless task, with each yak yielding a huge pile of matted wool whose mere disposal offered a problem unprovided for in the book of regulations.

Chanti watched the operations and protested vigorously to the officers in charge, but without avail. By the second day, the animals began to get restive, what with lack of their accustomed exercise and the unusual diet of dusty hay thrown down in front of them. Chanti feared that some minor

incident might precipitate a stampede, particularly as the yaks had immediately sensed the terror they inspired in the *byle-wallas*.

On the third day, the *byle-wallas* had put their heads together and decided that the yaks would be easier handled if their noses were pierced and threaded with a halter rope as prescribed for bullocks in the regulations. Chanti raged at the suggestion, insisting that no yak had ever been so treated in Tibet, nothing more than a nose halter being needed to control these animals. However, he was overruled, and a half-dozen yaks were told off for the experiment of nose piercing.

A large liver-and-white yak was the first victim. Surrounded by a dozen nervous *byle-wallas*, all talking at once, he was hobbled and thrown.

It was a mistake to undertake the experiment so close to the picket lines, for the first angry snorts of the big victim stirred the whole herd into alertness. More than two hundred yaks began to weave back and forth against their ropes, striking the ground sharply with nervous hoofs and trying to swing around so as to face the source of imagined danger.

Down the lines, the *byle-wallas* who were busy with their currycombs and water buckets began to shout warnings to each other. Their efforts to quiet the animals seemed only to aggravate the spreading tension of uneasiness.

Somebody tried to stop the nose-piercing proceedings, but the group around the hobbled yak were too busy with their task to pay any heed.

The final thrusting of the iron skewer through the cartilage between the prostrate yak's nostrils brought forth a bellow of pain and fright which electrified the whole herd. Every yak within hearing understood it as a call for help.

One of the basic characteristics of the yak is that he has the "herd instinct." When danger present itself, his first reaction is to join his comrades in offering a driving phalanx of armoured heads to the enemy. A stampede of yaks is a dangerous thing, because of the tremendous weight of the animals and the extreme sharpness of their horns and cloven hoofs.

However, the British picket line was strongly rooted and for the most part it held stanchly. The stampede did not develop, but at two or three points single animals succeeded in freeing themselves, and broke away.

Far down the line, one of the escaping animals turned on a terrified *byle-walla* who had just succeeded in extricating himself and his currycomb from between the heaving flanks of two picketed yaks. He screamed for help as he went down before the massive head of the charging beast.

But no help could reach him. The yak in combat is swift and sure. A second twist of the animal's head flattened the *byle-walla* on the earth, face upward.

Then the infuriated beast was upon him. For an instant he poised over the prostrate man, then bent his forelegs and crashed down into a kneeling position on the victim's abdomen. The mere weight of the blow of those knees was paralyzing. The man lay still, pinned down in the vice of two trim forelegs. The head of the huge beast was lowered, the fierce mouth within a few inches of the man's face.

In deliberate, workmanlike fashion, the yak proceeded to the kill. Shifting his great weight forward to his knees, the animal let his head drop a little lower. From the fierce mouth emerged his harsh red tongue, to lick the face of his victim.

The tongue of the yak is seven or eight inches long and four or four and a half inches wide. Its surface resembles a giant file, with diamond-sharp edges of cartilage which are ordinarily used for tearing lichen from the Tibetan rocks. Only on rare occasions is it used as a weapon of offence, but when so used it is one of the most terrible weapons in the whole catalogue of nature's armoury.

So it happened with the unfortunate *byle-walla*. The first passage of the yak's tongue across his face stripped the flesh from his cheek as if it had been mere moss on a boulder. The effect was exactly as if his head had been held against a spinning grindstone.

A dozen times the cruel tongue crossed his face and neck before help arrived. The other *byle-wallas* came up and drove off the yak with their brassbound bamboo *lathis*. Quietly he submitted to be led back to his place in the picket line, where he resumed the munching of his hay, while they removed the lifeless body of his victim.

As Chanti finished the gruesome story, Jowar burst into an unfeeling guffaw. Death, no matter how cruel, has not the same meaning to an Oriental that it has to a Westerner. It is not that they lack sympathy or "feelings." Perhaps it has

something to do with their ingrained fatalistic outlook on life. Even after the lifetime I have spent in Asia, it still shocks me to see the indifference of the living toward the death of those who are not intimately connected with them.

Jowar's laughter was unseemly to me, as a Westerner. But not so to Chanti, who understood clearly that it meant only Jowar's pleasure at the tragic narration as justifying his own attitude toward both yaks and plainsmen.

The conversation turned into a renewed argument between Chanti and Jowar on the subject of yaks versus mules. All the way back to Almorah the argument continued, without shaking the determined views of either disputant.

For many months afterward, we followed the news of the army's experiment with the yaks. Eventually it failed completely, as Chanti had predicted, through the inept handling which the animals received from the B.T.O.'s.

The yaks, three thousand in all, never thrived. The down-country food disagreed with them, and army red tape somehow defeated every effort to have it changed. Then came a cattle disease which swept the herds, killing them in hundreds. Even the survivors were left weakened and ineffective. In the final outcome, less than a dozen of the three thousand animals survived to do useful work with the British Army on the Himalayan plateaux.

Some time the experiment will be tried again. One British officer of the B.T.O.'s., Captain Wigram, understood clearly the problem of yak transport and made well-nigh superhuman efforts to overcome the difficulties of army organization which proved insurmountable. The record of his recommendations is set forth in the official archives and will be available for guidance when the time arrives.

As for the argument between Chanti and Jowar regarding the relative merits of yaks and mules for army transport in Tibet, the verdict of history is clear. Neither side wins. The British Army, when it came time to push into Lhasa, used neither yaks nor mules for carrying its supplies, but used *men*. As a beast of burden, the coolie got the verdict.

For army transport, it proved that a coolie's food supply was only one-seventh the weight of that required for a mule. On mountain trails, two coolies can carry as much as a mule. Therefore the animal's efficiency is far below that of the human carrier.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BRITISH LION MOVES

Snow's a bright, alluring cheat,
Snow's a sprite with cloven feet,
Snow's a soft, inviting thing
With a sly and deadly sting,
Snow's a fiend in fairy guise,
Snow's a white-haired man who lies.

—*Dance of the Bhuts*

BRITAIN'S answer to the Russian threat at Lhasa came with the launching of the Younghusband expedition in the late autumn of 1903. Younghusband himself was a diplomat, rather than a soldier; the 10,000 troops who eventually served in Tibet were actually under the command of Brigadier General J. R. L. MacDonald of the Royal Engineers. Both Younghusband and MacDonald had been preparing themselves for the northward move for five years, with the help of Captain W. F. T. O'Connor, a border officer who spoke, read and wrote the Tibetan language with complete ease.

The immediate excuse for the expedition was a border raid by Tibetan irregulars into Sikkim, a small British protectorate just north of Darjeeling. Darjeeling itself was the summer capital of India, and although it was 700 miles east of Almorah, our garrison had excellent telegraphic communication with it, and was only a little more than a day distant by rail and post, via Benares.

The Tibetan raiders, supposedly about 2000 strong, had broken through the Sikkimese frontier defences and blocked the caravan road at a point fifteen miles southward, erecting a wall of boulders which they announced as the "new boundary" between India and Tibet.

England met this move by sending Younghusband from Darjeeling, with a small armed escort, to protest and to negotiate, if possible, the peaceful retirement of the invaders

back to the old treaty boundary. At the same time formal letters of protest were sent, through Tibetan and Chinese traders, to the Dalai Lama, head of the Tibetan Government at Lhasa.

It was evident at once, however, that a punitive expedition of some kind would be necessary. Even while Younghusband was riding northward toward the barricade in the early summer, final orders for its organization were being issued.

Two companies from the Almorah garrison, one of Gurkhas and one of Pathans, together with a column of mule transport, were ordered to Darjeeling. Their departure amidst martial music and a great waving of flags was a big event for us. Although there was complete official reticence as to the reason for their transfer, the bazaar was agog with a great variety of explanations.

Meanwhile Younghusband, at the barricade, could find nobody with authority to negotiate. The Tibetan irregulars melted back into the hills and offered no resistance when his soldiers cleared away the boulders which had blocked the trade route.

Younghusband proceeded to the border and even pushed on a little way into Tibet. Three months he spent vainly seeking an interview with some Tibetan official who could give him assurances that the raiders would be punished and that there would be no recurrence of the incident, which was merely the culmination of a hundred smaller ones that had been recurring all along the frontier under the incitement of Dorjief, Russia's arch-conspirator at Lhasa.

England's determination to carry this matter through to a conclusion was strengthened by the defiant return, unopened, of the letters which had been sent to the Dalai Lama.

The expedition, which finally set out from Darjeeling in late November, consisted of an initial column of 1200 men, including British and native troops, coolie and mule transport, and a few small mountain guns.

For months we in Almorah had been anticipating the starting of the expedition. But when the news came, it was startlingly sudden. Even the departure of the troops and mules from our own garrison had not really prepared us for what happened. Despite everything, Chanti had believed and hoped that the warlike demonstrations along the border

were merely precautionary. He knew of the presence of Younghusband and MacDonald in Sikkim; he had talked with Captain O'Connor at Almorah during the latter part of July; he was aware of the troop concentrations at the Darjeeling railhead—but still he did not believe that England would actually make the contemplated move.

Telegrams over the official wires brought the announcement of the crossing of the Sikkim border into Tibet, with an advance party pushing ahead to blaze a trail toward Gyantse, which was the expedition's immediate objective, 200 miles from the frontier. Day by day thereafter the news of later developments came to us, to be discussed and interpreted and commented on by all the military and official personalities. For the next year the fortunes and misfortunes of the expedition were the most important news in our lives.

Chanti's work at the receiving centre of the secret Intelligence System on the western flank of the British advance was more important than ever before. Every few weeks he would go to Darjeeling to confer with the high Intelligence officers at the expedition's base; and on two occasions during the first winter he went on into Tibet to talk over the information he had received with O'Connor, who was Younghusband's chief adviser, or with Colonel Waddell, who was the medical officer of the expedition and a great authority on Tibetan custom and psychology.

The British forces, after crossing the Tibetan border, moved forward cautiously over a steep mountain trail, climbing steadily from an initial altitude of 8000 feet to Natu La Pass, 14,300 feet above sea level. Opposition was expected at every turning of the trail, and mounted advance parties were thrown out in strength to watch the rocky flanks of every pass.

Although no opposition developed, progress was slow. All the way, the British found huge stone *jongs*, or forts, commanding the trail, but deserted by their defenders. Lamaist monasteries were still occupied, but the gates were barred and communication with the monks was difficult. In every little village they were greeted by a frightened, hostile population who tried to turn them back with tales of Tibetan armies in the defiles, preparing to annihilate them.

It was hard for me, back at Simtolah, to understand why the British forces were advancing so slowly. With the week-

old *Pioneer* as my textbook and such piecemeal information as Jowar could obtain from his friends at the barracks, I moved a group of paper British flags forward along the trail on my map and wondered at their laggard pace. Even my father, who usually had a pretty adequate answer for any of my questions, admitted himself stumped.

More than a month passed before the column reached Phari, a bare 150 miles. My friend Wu Ming-fu, with his laden mules, would have covered this distance in six days, and the long caravans, with sixty or seventy animals, seldom took more than eight days from Phari to the border of Sikkim, just beyond the Darjeeling railhead.

My first comprehension of the difficulties that had accompanied the British advance came on a mountain-climbing trip which Jowar and I took up the slopes of Nanda Devi, above the snow line. For three days we fought the snow and wind through a trackless white waste, vainly seeking a path to a spur or lower peak which was our objective. It was on the third day that Jowar was laid low with snow blindness—one of the many difficulties that were assailing the British soldiers in the high passes between Darjeeling and Gyantse.

The moment we reached the snow line we had each put on a pair of the same hooded dark glasses that had been issued to all the soldiers in the Younghusband expedition. The lenses were so deeply coloured that they let through to our eyes no more than a twentieth of the sunlight that hit their outer surface. So opaque were they that in some of the dark ravines we had to remove them in order to see clearly the surface in front of us.

We had one spare pair, which was in my knapsack, but on the first day this extra pair had been smashed while I was squeezing my way through a narrow crevice between two jagged rocks. On the morning of the third day, I slipped and fell on a treacherous piece of snow-covered ice. My glasses came off and vanished down a deep crevice.

There was no time to go into elaborate conference as to how we would replace them. Both of us knew—Jowar, of course, better than I—the danger that lay in the burning sun which was focussing all its deadly white rays on the slope where we found ourselves.

Even as I picked myself up, instinctively closing my eyes until there was only the narrowest slit between lids, I found the noontide glare such that I could hardly endure it. Jowar,

SOUVENIR FROM THE PANCHAN'S ALTAR

(Illustration facing page 64)

This statuette, taken from a group of small bronze figures on the private altar of the Panchan Lama, was presented to the author by the pontiff himself, as a gift to Mrs. Enders. It is a representation of Amitabha, supreme being in the threefold godhead of Lamaism. Inasmuch as the Panchan Lama is the re-incarnation of this divinity, it must necessarily be regarded as a spiritual photograph or likeness of His Serenity. The gift was a very unusual one, never duplicated in the pontiff's contact with foreigners. It was as if he expressed a desire to be present always with the recipients, as a member of their family group. . . . The statue is a familiar conventionalized representation of the Deity, his head covered with snails (which took pity on Buddha as he sat with unprotected head in the merciless summer sun). The pearl of wisdom is visible between the eyes, and the long-lobed ears are the legendary sign of a god-like intelligence.

FOUR PORTRAITS OF THE PANCHAN

(Illustration facing page 65)

The two upper pictures show His Serenity officiating at the Kalashakra ceremony, one of the four different Lamaist religious services. He is seated on a throne covered with satin of the sacred yellow colour, flanked by two rows of eight chanting monks and musicians, who on either side constitute an antiphonal choir. In front of the pontiff is a pulpit or table covered with gold-embroidered brocades, on which he spreads a huge oblong book containing the musical score for the complicated ritual. Over his head is a ceremonial umbrella of white silk with gold fringe. The pictures are taken at the climax of the fourteen-day ceremony. In the left-hand picture he is wearing a cornucopia-shaped head-dress of brown yak wool, festooned with thousands of seed pearls. In the right-hand picture this has been supplemented by the gold crown which marks the culmination of the prolonged service. In the left-hand picture his hands are empty and are going through the intricate motions of the mudras, with each finger standing for one of the five elements of the universe. In the right-hand picture he has taken up his "bell" and "thunderbolt." The two lower pictures show him in less formal moments. In the left-hand picture he is resting after fourteen hours of continuous prayer, still seated on his yellow throne, but clad in mufti. In the right-hand picture he is broadcasting over an all-China hook-up, using Liu as interpreter at the microphone.





running back to help me, instantly stripped off his own glasses and put them over my eyes. I protested, but he was insistent.

"I will arrange everything, little master," he said, quite calmly.

We sat down on a hummock of snow. Jowar kept his eyes closed, opening them just the tiniest bit at intervals, until he could accustom himself a little to the glare.

Meanwhile he had unstrapped his knapsack and taken out the oil lamp which we used at night for heating our brick tea before rolling ourselves into our heavy blankets for sleep in the most protected spot we could find.

Digging a shelter for the oil lamp in the side of our hummock, Jowar lit the wick and held diagonally over it the tin flank of his water canteen until the metal was covered with a thin filament of smudgy lampblack. This lampblack he proceeded to rub on his eyelids and around his eyes, layer on layer, until they were surrounded by broad circles of deep black.

This, he explained, would partly protect him from the glare, by darkening the reflecting surface of the skin. Nearly half the light that enters the eye is reflected into it by the smooth skin surfaces around it.

Jowar talked as he worked, seeking to reassure me. The application of lampblack, he said, had relieved him considerably. But he would do better than that. He would make for himself some impromptu "glasses" of yak hair.

With his knife he stripped the side from his tin canteen. Then, cutting the tin carefully, round and round, he created a long metal strip, about a quarter of an inch wide, which he straightened out and doubled over, twisting it into what was really a piece of crude wire about twenty inches long. This he now fashioned into the frame for his impromptu spectacles. He made loops for the ears and a close-fitting notch to bridge the nose. On both sides of the eyes he twisted erect little "pillars" or "posts" of wire across which he wound threads of black yak hair, unravelled from his Tibetan blanket, so that they formed a double layer of parallel lines over his eyes. Held close against the eyebrows and cheeks by the wire frame, the thin openings between the threads permitted vision, but at the same time cut off the greater portion of the glaring sunlight.

Similar "sun nets" of yak hair are customarily used by

many of the Tibetan mountaineers on their gold-washing and cattle-herding expeditions.

With Jowar's new spectacles adjusted, we decided that we would turn back by the shortest route. We hoped, by forcing ourselves, to get below the snow line before nightfall.

All went well for about two hours, although Jowar had continual trouble keeping his yak-hair sun net in place, owing to the terrific winds that swept the mountain-side. Time after time we found ourselves enveloped in the *bhuus* of whirling snow, which move across the white slopes like waterspouts at sea. In the middle of these eddies the spinning ice particles cut into the skin as if they were broken fragments of glass, and the only protection is to bury one's face in wool-clad arms until the "snow devil" passes.

One of the largest *bhuus* which we encountered that day buzzed around us for what seemed an endless length of time, although probably no more than two or three minutes, then broke over our heads with a weird scream of wind which ended in a deadly silence as its whole burden of snow fell inertly around us, leaving us half buried in a white cone as high as our armpits—and more frightened by the silence than by the roaring that had preceded it.

Each successive *bhut* tore away a little of the yak hair from Jowar's eye protectors, and the sudden transition from the darkness of the *bhut's* interior to the dazzling sunlight became increasingly painful to him. I urged him to stop and repair his "spectacles," but he protested that it would waste too much time, especially as speed in getting off the snow field was the surest protection against snow blindness.

So we pushed on, faster and faster wherever the slopes were not too dangerously broken by rocks or crevasses. Jowar began to lag a little, complaining of a headache. I was alarmed by his complaints, because I knew that Jowar was enough of a stoic to endure all ordinary suffering.

As a matter of fact, his comments about his head were an indication that he knew what was coming, and was worried more about my safety than his own. He let me lead the way, and he tried closing his eyes whenever a safe little slope permitted him to feel his way with a fair degree of safety. This was the wrong thing to do, because the more you shut your eyes, the worse it is when you open them again.

It was only a little past mid-afternoon when Jowar began to

groan, involuntarily with every step. Behind me, I could hear his moaning "ai-hai, ai-hai" above the bellow of the gusty winds.

In the shelter of a gaunt rock shelf that rose a sheer 500 feet above us, I stopped and waited for him. Pantingly—for we were both straining our lungs to the utmost in our effort at speed—I urged him to take my glasses for at least a few minutes.

"No—no, sahib," he insisted, in an agonized voice. "That would be the worst thing possible. I am all right so far, but if my eyes fail, yours will still be good. If we try to share the glasses, we shall both get the blindness. Our best chance is to be certain that one of us keeps his sight."

He smoked a cigarette, puffing it feverishly, and munched a handful of *tsamba* (parched barley). I noticed that his forehead and the corners of his eyes were drawn into deep twitching wrinkles of pain.

We were 500 feet down the next slope when I suddenly heard Jowar stumble and fall sprawling in the snow. I turned back and helped him up. His hands went gropingly to his eyes.

"I am blind, *chota sahib* (little master)," he said bluntly.

His pain was such that he had to clench his hands and bite his lips in an effort to control himself.

I think I was too frightened to speak. I merely stood there, staring at him.

Jowar, with a great effort, spoke again.

"You will have to take my hand," he said, moving uncertainly to my side.

I reached for his hand, and we started slowly downward. It was hard going, for the footing grew increasingly uncertain, but for the next two hours we pushed on, doggedly, in a silence broken only when a groan escaped the tightly closed lips of my companion. About every fifteen minutes we would stop for a five-minute rest; I would eat a morsel of chocolate from my knapsack and Jowar would munch another handful of *tsamba*.

At the end of two hours we were both pretty nearly done in. On the previous slope I had only narrowly escaped plunging us both into a deep crevasse, when I had slipped on a hidden icy ledge. Jowar suggested that we stop and have some tea. I got the oil lamp from his knapsack, lit it and melted a canteenful

of snow. When the water was boiling, I cut off a slice of brick tea and let it brew to a rich amber.

Our pause this time lasted half an hour. The sun was getting perilously low. But we decided to push on, as long as the light lasted. Night came suddenly, and I carefully selected a crevice in the rocks that was almost a cave, where we camped for the night.

Under Jowar's direction I prepared a wet bandage for his eyes, and kept the bandage covered, throughout the night, with wet snow. This undoubtedly relieved the pain somewhat. Neither of us slept much. At daybreak, we decided to leave the bandages on his eyes for the rest of our journey to the end of the snow.

It was past noon when we reached the welcome green of lichen, gleaming on the wet rocks, with maidenhair fern and lily of the valley growing profusely in the shadows beneath them.

A mile and a half of easy walking and we were in a grove of stunted pine, where we waited until sunset cast a restful gloom on the hill-side. I lit a fire of pine cones and Jowar slept, his eyes already easier under their bandages, which I kept wet with water from a glacial mountain stream.

As dusk came on I unbandaged his head, and he opened his eyes, once or twice, tentatively. He suffered a renewal of the sharp pains at first, but he could see, dimly. His eyes were watery, the lids red with an angry inflammation, but he assured me confidently that the worst was over.

Within an hour he was cooking our evening meal, using his eyes quite normally, although I noticed that he avoided the smoke as much as possible.

In the morning he was practically recovered, and we made our way joyfully to the village where we had left our ponies.

Back in Almorah, four days later, I had gained, out of my mountain vacation, a new comprehension of at least one of the difficulties that the Younghusband expedition was encountering on the road to Lhassa—the persistent attacks of snow blindness. This peculiar affliction, we were told, was harassing the troops on every difficult advance up the mountain trail which the sappers were dynamiting into a semblance of a pathway for the daily supplies to be carried laboriously on coolie back over the gradually lengthening distance between base and advance post.

CHAPTER SIX

WINTER IN THE HIGHEST TOWN ON EARTH

There's only one escape from crowds:
Live in the sky among the clouds.

—*Lama Proverb*

WHILE Younghusband and MacDonald discussed daily the details of the campaign, the British column pushed steadily forward, slowly but surely, up the longest and steepest hill that a British army ever climbed.

The expedition had made a late start, seasonally speaking, and winter was upon them almost before they left the comparative comfort and safety of the Sikkim border. The daily march was always through snow, drifting and treacherous, or through ice and sleet and bitter wind, at lung-bursting altitudes.

Upward, ever upward they climbed, 6300 feet above their starting point in the first ninety miles. Until, at the end of four weeks, the advance guard staked camp in Phari, the highest town in the world. Here, and back a few miles in Chumbi Valley, the expedition went into winter quarters.

Younghusband himself, with a small escort, pushed on twenty miles to Tuna, where he had been unofficially promised a meeting with delegates from Lhasa. The delegates, when they eventually appeared, were disappointing. They were not exactly government representatives, but were three clever monks from the three great lamaseries at Lhasa, sent to match their wits against the British diplomat. They were masters of evasion, adroit in *pourparler*, adept at inventing excuses for delay.

Throughout the winter they kept Younghusband in a fury of uncertainty. They promised much, but delivered nothing. Darjeeling and Downing Street kept poking at him, in messages delivered over the flickering heliograph, to get his business settled and return to British soil. The English public was nervously unsympathetic with the whole affair; London

Press comment on his "aggression" was almost unanimously condemnatory; the rest of Europe was stirred into opposition by clever Russian and German propaganda.

Only Lord Curzon, Indian Viceroy and patriot, stood firm with Younghusband's conviction that British prestige, not only in India but throughout Asia, depended on the successful issue of this expedition. If Russia could be defeated or stalemated here, Curzon felt that England would have ten years of breathing space to prepare for whatever might next threaten the peace of India.

With an enviable patience, Younghusband—protected from the anger of Downing Street by Lord Curzon—conferred and argued with the three monks. Together they framed numerous draft treaties. The monks, tongue in cheek, deliberated their leisurely way, clause by clause, through these suggested agreements; then, in each successive instance, found excuses for refusing to initial or sign them.

In one case when Younghusband got them to the actual pointing of signing, all three forgot their names and signed the document with meaningless scrawls which may perhaps have been likenesses of some subsidiary demons in Lamaist theology. Captain O'Connor, student of the Tibetan language, was called in to examine the signatures.

"They have no meaning," he commented sarcastically. "Just scrawls, less important than the laugh of a Tibetan wild ass."

Meanwhile the army was digging itself into its uncomfortable winter quarters, consolidating its rearward communications, evacuating long columns of soldiers incapacitated by the rigours of King Winter's persistent hostilities, bringing up replacements, smoothing out the rough mountain trail with dynamite and gravel fill, installing a telegraph line.

The Tibetan army was invisible, somewhere behind the hills, but its hidden presence was everywhere felt, and its numbers were formidable enough to constitute a constant threat and menace. Ten thousand Tibetan soldiers were known to be in the area, in front and on the flanks. There was always the possibility of a surprise attack.

When the army entered Phari, the advance guard reported a formidable jong overlooking the town, with a large garrison, well-armed and provisioned to stand an indefinite siege. Younghusband was anxious to avoid hostilities, but Mac-

Donald insisted that the safety of his troops would not permit a hostile fortification along his line of supply. Against Younghusband's urgent advice, he prepared to launch an attack. But the size of the column apparently dismayed the defenders and they abandoned their position as the British approached. Inside the fort MacDonald found a year's supply of grain and yak butter, together with an astounding collection of ancient iron-and-bamboo armour.

Once in winter quarters, the army faced its difficulties and sought to overcome them as best it might. Chanti, Jowar and I spent many a winter afternoon discussing the handicaps of the Tibetan campaign with such visitors as came our way, either in the Almorah caravanserai or around the British barracks.

Chanti was very pleased that so far there had been no fighting. He had great confidence in Younghusband and O'Connor and was sure they would find a way of concluding a friendly treaty with Tibet, without any real use of force. But he had no liking for MacDonald, fearing in general the typical soldier's love of a fight "just for the sake of fighting."

It was in mid-February that Masih Ulla, a mountain battery *subahdar* (sergeant) who had been in charge of some of the mule syces at Almorah the previous summer, came back for a line of remounts.

Masih Ullah had been one of my best friends during my visits to the mule lines, and as a native noncom he rated the friendship of Chanti also. Swaggering a little with the distinction of his service in Tibet, he joined us one afternoon at the gate of the caravanserai and accompanied us to Chanti's upper room for a smoke and a talk.

Neatly bearded and unusually tall, Masih Ulla cut a fine figure in his red-and-gold regimental turban, his tight-fitting knee-length khaki coat, his broad red *cummerbund* (sash), his neat puttees and spurred boots. He carried with a flourish a silver-headed Malacca cane, his badge of office. His beard, parted in the middle, was dyed with henna as an indication that he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Under the glowing warmth of a charcoal brazier, Masih Ulla consented to join in a stimulating tippie of Chanti's famous barley beer, brewed in the Tibetan manner. This was quite a concession on his part, for such indulgence is strictly forbidden by his religion. However, even a Mohammedan

begins to get a few liberal ideas by the time he has risen to the exalted rank of *subahdar*. As he carefully explained to us, no harm could come of it so long as he was not seen.

Masih Ulla, intent upon extolling his own part in a heroic campaign, began the story of his experiences with a pardonable eulogy of the magnificent qualities of all soldiers who had been able to endure the hardships of this Tibetan adventure. Of course, only a few of them had been thus fortunate. Many had fallen by the wayside, but not so Masih Ulla or the men of his command.

I can assure you (he said) that never was there such an expedition. Every day, from the very start, was one to test men's souls. Such roads—such hills—such cold and such shortness of breath—such unbelievable illnesses, striking down men as if they had been poisoned by their mistresses!

You remember Dost Mahmud, the nephew of my brother's wife—the one with pockmarks in little circles on his cheeks? The third day out he was leading his mules over a soft gravel shelf that the lazy sappers chose to call a road because they were too stupid to realize that it might rain some day. Water had weakened it, and its foundation was full of Tibetan devils when Dost Mahmud's splendid, sure-footed mules came along. Down goes the road—phut!—into a mountain torrent fifty feet below. What would an ordinary low-down bullock driver do under those circumstances? Forget his animals and try to save his own silly hide, of course. Not so Dost Mahmud, who learned to be a mule driver under me. He stuck to the halter of his lead-mule, while the whole line slid down, atop the loosened tons of earth and rock, into the cold green water, and was washed away by the swift current. It was a noble sight. I was proud as I watched Dost Mahmud: he stayed at his post of duty to the end—and I would have shot him, with my own revolver, if he had done otherwise.

Yes, Dost Mahmud died a hero's death. But really he was one of the lucky ones. It was easier to die than to endure the things we all had to go through on the way up the hill to Natu La Pass. Not a man escaped some disaster—even myself, I had fourteen days of the mountain sickness. It was worse than the dreadful sea-sickness that I endured in the Red Sea on my voyage to Mecca—a thousand times worse.

Thanks to my devout life, I have a strong stomach, that

always served me well. But most of the pigs of unbelievers in the ranks found their bellies unable to deal with the food that the slovenly cooks served. Not that I blame the cooks—what can the best of them do with their stewpots when they are so far up in the clouds that the heat of the fire refuses to go into the boiling rice and mutton? (Water boils in these altitudes at about 180° Fahrenheit, and the starch in food cooked in boiling water is not sufficiently broken down to be properly assimilated.)

Our rice came out of the cooking pots as hard as almonds, and the fat on the mutton was still white. What kind of food is this for men working like ants, with lungs puffing until ribs and jaws ache?

By the end of a week of it, nine men out of every ten had *pate ka dard* (belly-ache). The doctor-sahib put them all on milk and chocolate, but no man can march on such baby food. And this chocolate—paughff—it is sweet and sickish, it makes you thirsty, the cure is almost as bad as the disease. For my men, I let the doctor give them what he liked, but after he had gone I passed each of them an opium pill, which soon stopped the gnawing pains. It proved no real cure, however, for after its first effects had worn off, they would fall down by the trailside, their faces black from efforts to vomit a meal which had long since been vomited.

Every day I lost a man or two, until I myself was doing ten men's work. Half my unit was in the hospital before I got replacements, and the replacements were no better than the others.

At the first village I collared a couple of Tibetans and wrung out of them a bit of information as to how the natives deal with this pesky mountain sickness. They took me to a patch of wild rhubarb, and said this was their remedy. I tried it myself—and a brave man I was to do it. It was as sour as green mango, and the eating of such raw sheep-fodder looked to me like a crime against the Prophet. But it had a pleasing effect on the stomach, and I tied a bundle of it under the girth of every lead-mule. My men made terrible faces when I told them to eat it, and perhaps some thought I was trying to poison them. But we fared better from that time on.

There were plenty of other things for me to worry about. Snow blindness, for instance. If a man had eyes like a mule, he would be much happier in those mongrelly mountains; a

mule can look straight into the sun. Even the coolies—human mules—pull their long hair down over their foreheads and dare the sun to do its worst. But men of superior station, like ourselves, must suffer the tortures of the *be-iman* (infidels) if they so much as let the sun peep behind their smoked glasses.

While the sun burns the eyes, the cold-devils settle in the bones and turn a man's liver to water. Natu La Pass is the coldest spot on this earth, I am sure. The Buddhists, you know, have a cold hell, reserved for thieves who steal at night—if it's anything like Natu La Pass, I'm glad I'm not a Buddhist.

I stood beside my mules at the entrance to the pass and watched a young British officer measuring the cold with a magic glass *chiz* (thermometer). He took it out of soft wrappings of cotton-wool and held it where the cold wind hit it full on its red bulb. But it was never meant for such cold as this. Piff!—and the glass burst into brittle dust like the ice which flew before the wind and cut our faces as we marched.

Every night the cold-demons would sit on our camp. Every morning two or three sentries would be found with toes or fingers black and useless. Twice I saw dead men carried from sentry stations, frozen like a block of rock from head to foot, their black beards turned a dazzling white with the frost.

Clothing is a vain protection against cold like this which the Tibetans have sent into the passes to fight us. You would have laughed to see me, agued and shivering, with the garments of five men—quilted cotton overalls, felt overboots, a sheepskin *poshtin* (coat) over a lamb's-wool vest, fur-lined mittens with woollen gloves underneath, and a Balaklava cap under my turban. Even my mules didn't know me, and I could hardly move under all the stuffiness of it.

You remember Achmed, the lazy devil who was always filling himself with book learning? He found a cushy job as orderly to the captain-sahib. But he kept coming back to see me, because when he was promoted I had borrowed a few rupees from him. He and the other orderlies were nearly crazy over the officers' *bandobust* (routine). Day after day they had to eat abuse for not having the shaving water hot enough. But they couldn't get the heat to go into the water, no matter how hard they made it bubble. So by the time an officer had started shaving, the hot water was a block of ice.

So now, all the officers are growing beards. Some of their

beards are the straw colour of the *bhusa* (fodder) we feed the mules, and some are brown like the coats of the mules. Thanks be to Allah, my captain-sahib, although he is a Christian, has the fine red beard of a devout Mohammedan.

It's a nine days' wonder when the officers stop bathing. But what else can they do? There'll be no more baths until the cold-demon is called back to the black mountains behind Lhasa. . . . Ha! Ha! Most of the officers have even started rubbing themselves with yak butter to keep their skins from cracking—and how they smell when they sweat!

As for us who are followers of the Prophet, and are admonished to wash five times a day before turning towards Mecca for our prayers, may Allah forgive us! We can't wash, and we can't even loosen our girdles, as called for by the Koran. . . . But those of us who live to meet the Tibetans, who are rascal infidels, can perhaps gain absolution with our swords.

Whether any of us will live or not is another question. I thought my time had come, one day just below the Natu La Pass. We were waiting, as usual, for the *bevakoof* (weak-minded) sappers to fix a piece of road. They came to me for straw to build a fire, and I asked them angrily: "Why should we stand here in the icy wind, with the sweat freezing to our bodies, while you make merry warming yourselves with a fire?" So they explained that warmth was necessary for the *patakha* (dynamite) before it would blow up the rocks.

I didn't believe them, but grudgingly I gave them some straw, and then accompanied them over to the shallow ravine where they were building their fire.

The *patakha* was piled in several wooden cases, just off the trail. For warming it, the *susti* (lazy) sappers had found somewhere a sheet of corrugated iron. The whole proceeding looked pretty irregular to me, and I asked them if they had received proper orders from an officer.

As you all very well know, there is less discipline among the sappers than among any branch of the service. These *budmashes* (rascals) shrugged their shoulders and asked me if I thought they needed an army order every time they pushed a spade into a pile of dirt.

"We use the *patakha* just like you mule men use the quirt," said one of the dirtiest of them, a cross-eyed scoundrel that I would never have trusted to currycomb a bullock.

By this time they had built their fire and supported the iron

sheet above the blaze by insecure piles of stones at each corner. When they started to pile the sticks of frozen *patakha* on the hot iron surface, I decided it was time for me to get back to the mule line.

I moved with a certain dignity, but without waste of time. For, after all, I had come up these hills and suffered unbelievable hardships to fight Tibetans, not to be a sacrifice to the *paggie* (crazy) sappers.

But I wasn't fast enough. The crash came as I was just clambering back to the trail, and it threw me about the length of a five-mule train through the air, into a snowdrift.

When the rocks stopped falling, there was nothing but a hole in the ground where the sappers and their fire had been. I picked up one of their belts: its owner had been blown all to bits, right through the circle of his belt, which was still buckled and showed hardly a scratch.

I got back to my mule line. The mules were covered with dust and powder from the blast, but not one of them had shown the slightest sign of fear, nor had any of them tried to break from the line.

But the next time I give a sapper any straw for a fire, I'll make sure he lights it a half a mile away from my picket line.

It was a happy day when we got the news, at Phari, that we were going into winter quarters. It is bad enough, of course, to spend the winter in a town which is no better than a pigsty; but even a pigsty is better than the living death of trying to march on in the bitter cold of those *Bhotiyal* (Tibetan) passes.

This Phari is like some dirty down-country village of mud huts, except that some of the houses have two stories. The place is full of dogs, which we Mohammedans hate. There is a *dewana* (silly) little stream that would trickle through the middle of the village if it weren't frozen stiff and solid.

Up above the town on the cliff-side is a fort that would fall down if five of my muleteers attacked it with their quirts. It was empty, like all the Tibetan jongs we had seen along the way.

The people of Phari were not very friendly. You know that I am one who likes to study strange places and people. I had heard a good deal about the pleasant hospitality of the Tibetans—how they take the traveller into their home, give him the best of everything, assign one of the women to make him comfortable and happy. I thought I might learn something

new and interesting, that I could take back as a tale for my wives in Amritsar.

But these Phari folk are *chamars* (low-caste). They have no manners, no respect. I watched the women in the street. Most of them had their faces smeared with red *kutch* (areca nut), which turns blackish in the air, and they wore strange hats of wool and metal, spread out like birds' wings over their heads. I waited for some hours, disgusted with their appearance, until a young woman, without *kutch* on her face, passed me. Her skin was like honey, her eyes were lamps, her teeth, pearls. "Aha," I said to myself, "now I am ready to test out the Tibetan hospitality!"

I followed her until she entered one of the two-story mud houses, at the far end of the town. After waiting a time, I approached the doorway and pushed inside a dark, smoke-filled room. There was a fire of yak dung in the middle of the room, and the family was sitting around it, on woollen quilts. There was a pot of mutton boiling on the fire, and some of the elders in the group were mixing *isamba* into a paste in their wooden bowls of buttered tea. The girl I had followed was seated between two ugly old women.

Everybody seemed startled at my appearance in the room, particularly the two elderly men who were seated nearest the door. I naturally put down their surprise to respect for my uniform.

As no one said any words of welcome, I took two or three steps toward the group. I waved my hand amiably toward the young woman, for I could see a gleam of recognition in her eyes, and I realized that she had seen me following her. Any pleasure she might have wanted to show was cut short, however, by a few sharp words from one of the hags, who evidently commanded her to leave the room, since she immediately rose and went out.

I found myself facing a roomful of standing Tibetans, like a recruit called up before the colonel at Durbar. One of the old men advanced excitedly toward me, and began to make noises which sounded like a mule chewing thistles.

For the honour of my uniform, I faced them bravely for the time it takes to draw twelve breaths. Then I smartly turned on my heel and marched through the door. You can well imagine how impressed they must have been, and how differently they probably would have acted if I had come back the next day—

which I had planned to do, if my orders had not arrived to return to Almorah for remounts.

Chanti stopped Masih Ulla's narration at this point. It was well known that when he got on to the subject of his amatory adventures, he was not only prolix but also incredible. Moreover, we were not particularly interested in this phase of the Tibetan campaign. Chanti had work to do, and it was time for Jowar and me to be starting back for Simtolah.

At supper that night I told my interested family what I had learned from Masih Ulla. Long after the table was cleared, we sat under the flickering light of the kerosene lamp and talked about the cruel trail to Phari.

I saw a good deal of Masih Ulla during the week he remained in Almorah and got many additional details of the winter hardships of the troops. In general his story was pretty close to facts that came to me through other channels.

Aside from the medical handicaps of the Tibetan altitudes which manifested themselves in mountain sickness, snow blindness, pneumonia and acute indigestion, one of the principal difficulties of the expedition was the lowered vitality of the troops, caused by the lessened oxygen content of the rarefied air. Any violent physical exertion brought acute exhaustion, resembling a paralysis. All movement or work had to be slowed down to the tempo of the altitude.

Wounds healed slowly, and slight scratches were serious matters. This also seemed due to the lowered oxygen in the air. It brought additional burdens to the medical staff and remained a problem throughout the expedition's stay in Tibet.

Altitude also had its effects on the fighting equipment of the troops. The sighting of rifles was entirely thrown out by the rarefaction of the air. A range of 1350 yards had to be corrected to 1050 yards at 13,000 feet above sea level. At 15,000 feet the tension of the fusee springs on the Maxim guns had to be reduced from $7\frac{1}{2}$ pounds to 4 pounds. Lubrication of all weapons became difficult—oil had to be discarded and black lead used instead.

While Masih Ulla was in Almorah, I spoke with him about the comparative merits of mules and coolies as carriers for the army. Remembering the long arguments between Jowar and Chanti over mules and yaks, and the many discouraging

predictions that had been made of the utility of my beloved Missourians, I found that Masih Ulla took a somewhat qualified attitude.

"Mules are wonderful," he said, gravely weighing his words. "But if you want my expert opinion, they are too good for this kind of work. Their intelligence and superior physical qualities are thrown away on the Tibetan trails. What this type of transport really needs is a dumb, brainless animal, like a Sikkimese coolie."

The coolie, he explained, does not need to be curry-combed and bedded down for the night. He can shift for himself.

I found out later, through the quartermaster's clerk, that 40,000 pounds of supplies and ammunition were being carried every day from the border to Phari on the backs of Sikkimese and Bhutia coolies. Even over these rough mountain trails, the normal load carried by these men was seldom less than 150 pounds. Chanti later saw a Sikkimese coolie carrying three ninety-pound timbers up over Natu La Pass: he landed them at Phari just ten days after leaving the supply base on the Sikkimese border.

SO THIS IS HEAVEN

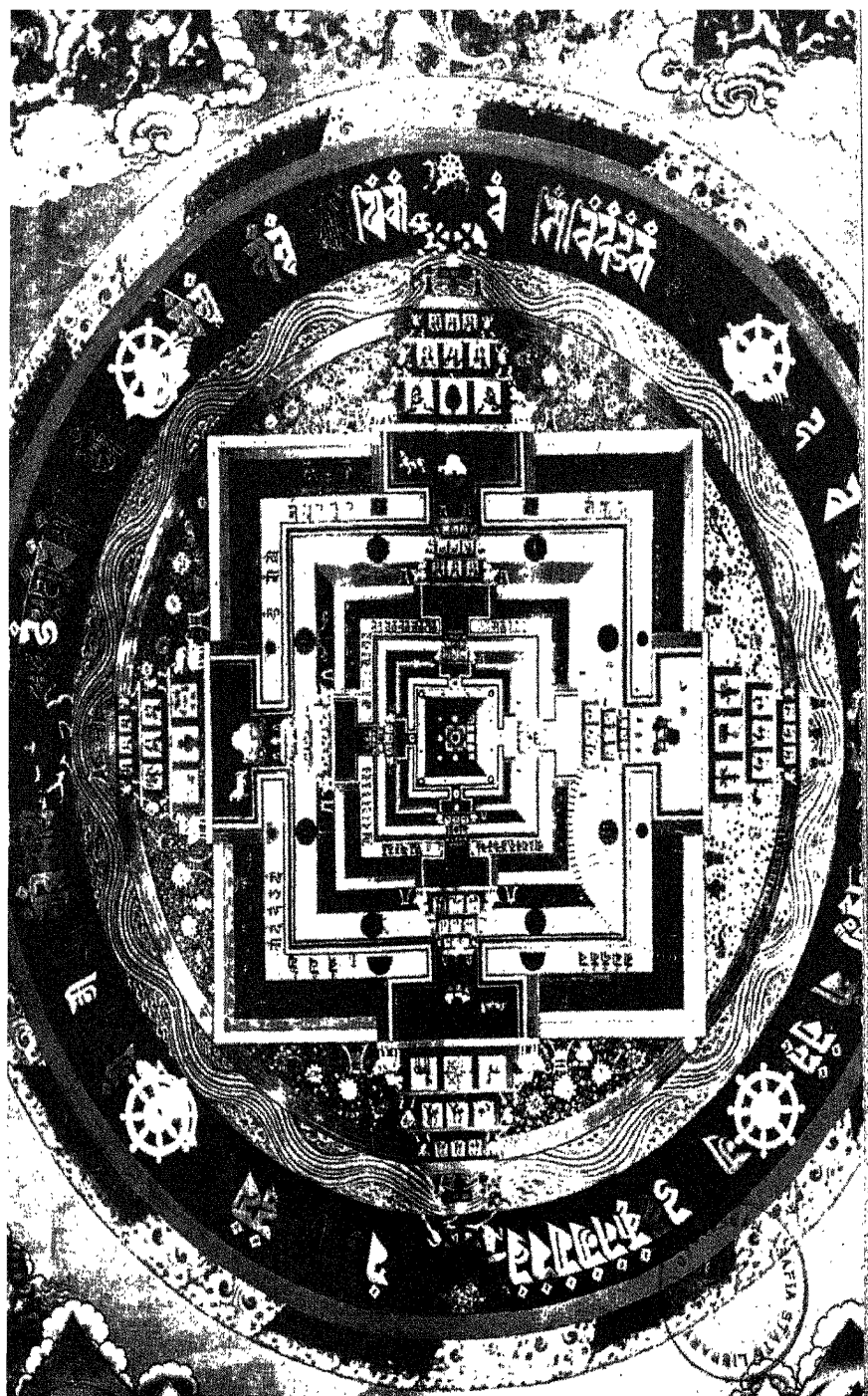
(Illustration facing page 80)

At certain important Lamaist ceremonies, temple altars are decorated with elaborate sculptures carved from immense quantities of rancid yak butter brightly painted with vegetable dyes. Special monks are trained from childhood in the art of carving in butter; they wander across the country and exercise their art in monasteries from Siberia to India. Their work is kept carefully hidden until it is completed, sometimes after six or seven weeks; then it is unveiled at night, and a great crowd of pilgrims is permitted to march ~~devoutly~~ past the completed product. Nobody ever gets a second view, for the sculpture is destroyed at midnight. . . . The photograph shows one of the most ambitious butter sculptures ever attempted. It is a complete map-in-relief of the land of heaven, which the Panchan Lama left to come to earth and to which he will return after his earthly job is done. The central circle is 40 feet in diameter and contains more than 1000 pounds of butter. It was executed by the Panchan Lama's personal butter sculptors, who are always attached to his household staff, on the occasion of the death of the Dalai Lama.

PANCHAN'S EVERYDAY ATTIRE

(Illustration facing page 81)

For the routine of meeting pilgrims and official visitors, the Panchan wears a Burgundy-coloured robe of homespun yak wool, with an undervest and apron of heavy crimson silk, embroidered thickly with an intricate design in threads of gold wire. His arms are bare; around his left wrist is twisted his rosary of rheetah seeds, polished like ebony. At his feet poses one of his sacred lion dogs. These dogs have an important religious significance in Lamaism, and are always kept in personal attendance upon the great incarnations. Each dog has its own retinue of servants. . . . The Panchan is stockily built, about five feet six inches tall. His face is swarthy, his moustache jet-black over a mouth which is strong but smiles easily. His hair is close-cropped, of a shade which might be called salt-and-pepper, above a forehead broad and high. He has a well-formed, high-bridged nose, and eyes unusually deep-set, black and lively.





CHAPTER SEVEN

FIGHTING IN THE AIR

In the simplest words
That the guru writes,
Kites are paper birds
And birds are feathered kites.

Which do you prefer—
Shrieking living things,
Or the pleasant whirr
Of lifeless paper wings?

—*Tibetan Kite Song*

AT the very time when Younghusband had been beginning the preparations for his expedition, the Wrights at Kitty Hawk took to the air. The newspapers in India made a great to-do over this American achievement, and we at Simtolah read their despatches and comments with more than a passing interest.

I was engaged at the time in an orgy of kite-flying, matching my American-style kite in aerial combats with the tailless Indian *pathangs* which were used by the youths of Almorah.

Aerial combats with kites have been a popular sport everywhere in Northern India since time immemorial, indulged in not only by the boys, but by their fathers as well. The most popular "flying fields" are the housetops. Whenever the wind is right, there is an announcement, circulated by word of mouth throughout the town, that certain important combats have been arranged. Betting on an extravagant scale starts forthwith, and feeling runs high.

At Almorah, the launching of the first pair of rival kites on such an occasion would draw a picturesque crowd into the streets, and on the adjacent roof-tops and balconies. Up from two roof-tops would flutter the coloured paper birds, in graceful diamond shapes. Once well in the air, the duel would begin. The idea was to cross the strings of the two antagonists, and pull them back and forth against each other until one was

severed. The winner was entitled to chase and pick up the vanquished kite, a task in which he had the assistance of the whole village.

There was an art to this game, and several definite schools of technique. First of all came a long series of jockeyings for position before the strings came into contact—getting the advantage of the prevailing wind and catching the opponent's string at a point where it was taut. Then a skilful give-and-take in the "sawing" operations, slackening the string quickly when the enemy attacked, tightening it in counter-attack.

The strings of combat kites were always covered with a hardened paste of glue and ground glass, to give them a cutting edge. One had to be very careful in handling these strings, which would tear the hands swiftly and surely if they slipped over the flesh. So they were wound on large wooden spools or reels, which spun freely on a two-foot bamboo axle. The axle was held tightly in the bend of the left elbow, which acted as a brake, leaving the right hand free to spin the reel or to grasp the stationary string for a final *coup de grâce*.

After the news of the Wrights' exploit in North Carolina, I built the largest kite ever flown in Almorah, and named it after them, lettering it with their name in huge crimson letters beneath a somewhat crude reproduction of the American flag.

Chanti, Jowar and I had many discussions of the Wrights' *murgi* (chicken). We had only the vaguest ideas as to what it was like. Chanti pictured it as something like a soaring Himalayan eagle; Jowar thought of it as a winged bullock cart; to me it was probably a kite with flapping wings. None of us had any conception of what was meant by a "propeller," as mentioned in the dispatches.

Around the Almorah barracks there were a dozen different explanations of this "machine that flew." Most of the British officers were somewhat familiar with rubber balloons and crude motor-driven gas-bags, the result being that they pictured the new machine as somehow compounded of balloons, kite surfaces and wings.

The first picture I saw of the Wrights' airplane was in the possession of an officer of the Royal Engineers, who had found it in an English illustrated weekly. To me it was a great disappointment, lacking any of the beauty and grace with which I had endowed it. Of course, my education in mechanics had been pretty fragmentary—I had never seen an automobile,

never used a telephone, never seen an electric light or a motion picture. I had heard one gramophone, which functioned so badly that it impressed me not at all.

It was about the beginning of spring—when Young-husband's columns were leaving the winter camps for their first skirmish with the Tibetan troops at Gharam Jharna—that my father called my attention to a copy of the *London Quarterly* containing an article on "Conquest of the Air," which gave us a better idea of the new flying machine and enabled us to discuss its possibilities in terms of the mountain country where we lived.

Because my English was more exact and facile than Chanti's, I translated the unusual phrases painfully into Hindustani for him and Jowar, and later for many of their friends, until the magazine was so frayed and worn that I carefully took out the precious pages and mounted them on cardboard, with a protective covering of transparent wax paper.

It is interesting to look back and re-read the paragraphs which interested us most, and which supplied us with material for wild flights of imagination in which we pictured a covey of these machines accompanying some future British expedition to Lhasa, or carrying a precious cargo of gold, musk and gems from Gartok or Koko Nor.

"The practical airship," wrote the author, a prominent expert on engineering, "is a combination of the aerostat and aeroplane, with a peculiar adaptation of screw propellers. . . . True aviators (the term is used as applying to the machine, rather than its operator) with flapping wings are impracticable for large machines for purposes of utility.

"In every case in which man has adopted artificial locomotion he has never followed Nature as a teacher, nor copied her methods of applying force. Upon the land he substitutes a mechanically driven wheel for the system of levers used in animal locomotion, and on the sea he does not accept the fin as a prototype, but uses the more effective screw propeller. It follows, therefore, that he does not look to the bird or bat for guidance in the matter of aerial propulsion, although he does not disdain to adopt a few minor wrinkles in the way of automatic balancing.

"Look at the huge skeleton of an air liner in process of construction at the yard. The back and ribs resemble the osseous

structure of a gigantic antediluvian saurian, the tubular steel frames tapering from root to extremity to afford the maximum of strength with the minimum of weight.

"The railway and the automobile car were in their time decried and termed impossible by the pessimists, then smilingly admitted to be amusing eccentricities, and behold! like a magical transformation, in a short time all these wonders become indispensable alike to optimist and to pessimist.

"Imagine a huge terminus, say on Wimbledon Common, where the winged giants are resting, each ready to start to time, carrying its complement of passengers to the confines of the kingdom—nay, the Empire itself. What a splendid bird's-eye view crossing the mighty ocean, watching the resistless waves and the pitching rolling liner with her creamy wake and the thunderous seas recoiling from her bow, from an elevation above.

"The airship as a war auxiliary has already been favourably considered by the British War Office, since Dr. Barton has been commissioned to build a special ship for experimental purposes."

The concluding paragraph was the one which proved most stirring to our imaginations. We pictured the Barton airship as preparing to leave Wimbledon Common almost any time, bound for Darjeeling or Almorah, and we speculated as to what the golden eagles of the Tibetan valleys would think of such a rival.

With a group of soldiers from the Almorah garrison, we discussed one day the possible use of airplanes in warfare. The infantrymen informed the cavalymen that this new machine spelled the end of mounted soldiers: scouting, long-distance reconnaissance, contact with the enemy and the other functions of cavalry would be performed more efficiently by the air units. The cavalymen replied by taunting the airplane as a child's toy, which would never have a part in serious warfare.

One of the infantrymen, an imaginative fellow with a special spite against the cavalry, proceeded to draw a fearful word picture of what warfare would be like when armies took to the air. There would be no more kicking, squealing horses to rob the infantry of the laurels of victory!

What interested me most in his narration was a fervid

passage portraying the sky of Almorah darkened with flying machines, each one fighting an enemy plane from out of the north.

Because of the bright colours which always decorated our kites, I pictured the British planes as wearing the colours of the rainbow, but the machines from the north were all black, like great bats.

It was this mental picture which inspired me to organize, a month later, a kite-flying gymkhana which eventually grew into the greatest sporting event of the year in Almorah. Originally my idea was merely to get together all the boy kite-fliers whom I knew, and on a given afternoon to get aloft, at the same time, perhaps fifty or sixty *pathangs*. By the time I had this arranged the idea had caught fire. The older kite-fliers joined without invitation. Every shop in the bazaar had its own entrant in the tournament.

Jowar, who was himself one of the most ardent of the local kite fighters, warmed gradually to the plan, and began to organize the local experts and champions. Several fliers from the native troops in the barracks indicated their intention of competing for the prizes which Jowar had collected by solicitations in the bazaar.

The first prize was a glossy black billy goat, which could be sold or eaten, according to the religion of the winner. The second prize was sixteen pounds of *ata* (hand-ground wheat flour).

The gymkhana was no longer a boy's affair. Although I still officiated as the leader of the young kite-fliers, Jowar was master of ceremonies for the more serious business of adult combat, on which many a rupee was being wagered even a week before the date fixed for the tourney.

Even the officers' mess at the barracks got wind of the affair and made an occasion of it. Knowing nothing about the relative merits of the various kite-flying champions, the British officers formed a blind pool, each one drawing a number which corresponded to one of the local experts. The colonel drew Jowar, and promised champagne for the mess if he won the forty pounds from his investment of fifteen rupees. Even the chaplain took a chance, and drew a six-fingered *chunga*—a good-natured fool who was the butt of all the bazaar jokes, but who strangely enough was a rather skilful kite-flier, full of

quick shifts and tricky strategy concealed behind the disarming clumsiness of a deliberate clown.

The gymkhana opened at two o'clock—a little early for those who love their tiffin, but necessary because the midday wind is likely to die down toward sunset, and a combat in a dying wind is a tame affair. It opened with what might be termed a “dress parade” from the courtyard of the caravanserai and the near-by fields, with every entry taking the air at a low altitude.

The showing astounded me, and even surprised the phlegmatic Jowar. We had expected to see perhaps a hundred *pathangs*, but there were more than a hundred inside the caravanserai, and nearly twice as many outside. Practically all of them were brand-new, specially built for the occasion, of the lightest, toughest and most flexible split bamboo that could be found on the hill-sides, skilfully hardened in the coals of a dung fire

On each frame was stretched coloured tissue-paper, carefully reinforced and pasted on with the sticky sap of the fig tree. The colours ranged through all the hues of the rainbow, with reds predominating. The scene resembled a convention of giant butterflies. The strings were dyed to match the colours of the kites, and the thousands of little particles of glass along their lengths glistened like sparks of fire in the bright sunlight.

A bugler from the regiment had sounded the signal for the start, and a detail of Sikhs with Scottish bagpipes played their weird music continuously from the roadway in front of the caravanserai.

The *pathangs* had hardly risen from the ground, however, before trouble began. In a dozen places, strings had become tangled and a number of lively arguments required the attention of Jowar and his assistant marshals. There was a long delay in beginning the preliminary series of combats, but the delay was more than made up by the fact that a goodly number of would-be contestants found themselves kiteless. This, however, only served to heighten the rivalry among the survivors.

For the championship fighting, the village was divided into four sections, so that four contests could go on at the same time, the duellists conducting their operations as usual from the housetops. Each group demanded that a British officer be delegated to act as referee.

Jowar was so busy as chief marshal that he was unable to participate in the preliminaries. Under any ordinary rules, this would have barred him from the contest, but the subalterns who were serving as referees, finding that he was the colonel's "draw" in the messroom pool, privately shoved him into the semi-finals, where he was pitted against one of the garrison mule *syces*. Jowar was no match for this fellow, who had learned his kite-flying in Amritsar, but again the young officers came to Jowar's rescue, by informing the soldier that if he knew what was good for him he would not have the gall deliberately to defeat the colonel's entry.

"At the best, you win only a black billy goat," they slyly told him. "That's worth two rupees, and here they are," handing him the two coins. "But it means champagne to us—and this refereeing has been thirsty work."

So Jowar came through, without effort, to the finals. There was a long wait before he found out who his opponent was. The contests on the other side of the village had been bitterly fought, but finally the chaplain's man, the clown from the bazaar, had come out victorious.

Jowar's friends, the subaltern referees, groaned as this finalist appeared. They had no hold on him, as he was a bazaar man. They would have tried to bribe him, but they didn't have enough bazaar Hindustani to accomplish it.

However, Jowar reassured them. "This fellow is the village idiot," he told them, "and only succeeds by cutting capers which distract his enemy's attention. I know his tricks, and he will never fool me. Moreover, his string is frayed by many contests, while mine is still fresh."

The contest was staged on a single roof-top, the biggest in the village, with Jowar and the *chunga* at opposite corners, both facing downwind in such a way that the kites would rise above the court of the caravanserai. Here was gathered the Sikh bagpipers and all the officers of the garrison. The first-prize billy goat, tied to a stake, was bleating noisily in the midst of a crowd of children. Either in the courtyard or in the street outside was a gaping crowd which included practically every male resident of Almorah. The balconies of near-by houses were filled with veiled women in coloured *chuddars*.

Jowar's kite was a bright yellow. The *chunga's* was a dirty brick-red. As the helpers launched them from several roof-tops away, in response to the starting signal of a bugler, the

crowd gave a shout, which the clowning *chunga* acknowledged by leaning over the narrow parapet and bowing to the people in the street, twelve feet below. The gesture cost him several minutes of hard work, for while he was bowing, several loops of string slipped off his reel and became entangled with his right hand and the reel's axle. Meanwhile Jowar had got his kite aloft in a workmanlike manner and started to move along the edge of the roof so that the bungling *chunga* was behind him, in a disadvantageous position.

Eventually, after much backing and filling, the *chunga* got his *pathang* to a respectable height. Jowar pressed his advantage, manœuvring his way around the roof so as to keep his enemy always on the defensive.

The crowd approved of his boldness and cheered him lustily. The colonel excitedly offered to put another five rupees on Jowar, and finally placed his money, at 2 to 1, with a battalion commander. The chaplain woefully remarked that heaven had always saved him from the sin of winning wagers, and this evidently would be no exception.

Meanwhile the hard-pushed *chunga* was fighting desperately to get out of the position in which he found himself. Nervously he dodged and circled, but always the cool and collected Jowar let him out of one corner only to push him into another.

Far aloft, the two kites swirled and circled, two dizzy diamonds of red and yellow which actually seemed to be in combat with each other.

Despite the many "cutting strokes" which Jowar had aimed at his opponent, the lines were still apart. At last his opportunity came, and with a swift movement of his whole body, at the same time throwing both arms and his reel over his head in a wide crescent, he engaged the *chunga's* line in what the crowd considered the final attack.

By this time the *chunga's* mouth was hanging wide open. With eyes fixed on the silver kite strings overhead, he was backing desperately to evade the quick slashing stroke that would inevitably follow.

Unaware of his position close to the edge of the roof, he backed into the low parapet, lost his balance and catapulted backward out of sight, still clutching firmly his kite string.

The sudden pull on the slender silver line accomplished what no skill in manœuvre could have done. Instantaneously

it severed Jowar's string, and the gay yellow *pathang* sickeningly sagged and fell to the earth.

The crowd gasped. Victory had come unexpectedly to the red champion, but the victor was nowhere in sight. He had dropped head-first into a pile of *bhusa* and was some minutes in extricating himself. He staunchly held the string of his kite, which triumphantly curvetted in the sky above.

He still calls himself the champion of Almorah.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GOD IN HUMAN FORM

Trees are *saffh* infidels,
In them no devotion dwells.
But when God among them strides
There's a surge of holy tides,
And the irreligious trees
All go down upon their knees,
Saying prayers and singing hymns
As they bend their leafy limbs.

—*Ballad of Koko Nor*

IT is a far cry from the Younghusband expedition, ploughing its tedious way in the July sunshine toward its destination in the lofty valley of Lhassa, to the quiet monastery-palace of Tashilhunpo, 200 miles from the intrigues and tribulations of the Tibetan capital.

But here, under the gilded domes of a holy city, rested the ultimate solution of Tibet's destiny.

Here, for a thousand years, God in human form had walked among the aspens and the junipers.

The young Panchan Lama, a mysterious figure, was barely twenty-two years old. He had come into his exalted office only four years previously. The reincarnation of Buddha, he now held a position that was religiously the highest in the Tibetan theocracy.

The occupant of this post was a young man of reserved and studious mien. Nearly twenty-three years before, the soul of the Lord Buddha had made its mysterious way to a remote mountain village and had entered the womb of a woman who happened to be the wife of a woodchopper, so poor and so obscure that even his name is now forgotten.

Miracles accompanied the birth of the infant, and these eventually identified him as the reincarnation of God. At the age of weaning—four years in Tibet—he was taken from his

mother and formally installed in the priest city of Tashilhunpo. For thirteen years, while regents ruled, he was trained in the holy ritual, memorizing all of the 108 books of Lamaist scripture. Then, at eighteen, he was installed on his yellow satin throne.

The miracles which accompany the birth of a Grand Lama are an integral part of the "theatre" of Lamaism. These miracles are of several varieties, the first of which must be some sort of natural phenomenon or occurrence, such as an eclipse of sun or moon, an earthquake an avalanche or a cloudburst. The lucky infant must not only be born on exactly the appointed day, but must also give a miraculous sign of its divine origin. The approved signs are seven in number, including a full set of teeth, a birthmark resembling the stripe of a tiger's skin, or the ability to speak the name of Buddha. In addition, the mother must report a "vision," and there must be local "miracles" occurring in the village or neighbouring localities, faithfully authenticated and reported to the supreme authorities by the local priests.

When a new incarnation is about to be born, the excitement throughout Tibet is comparable to that which precedes a presidential election in America. Almost every village has a possible candidate, and both priests and populace watch the home of the expectant mother zealously.

The date of the birth is announced throughout the length and breadth of Tibet many months in advance. It is determined by the simple process of adding the 149 days which any soul must spend in purgatory to the ordinary period of human gestation.

On the appointed day, there are usually a dozen or more infants who "qualify." All of them have been born on the right day and under the right auspices, all of them have come into the world with one or more of the required miracles, properly authenticated by the priests. All of them have had mothers with a "vision."

In due course their claims are examined by the proper authorities, who contrive to eliminate all but three candidates. Before the National Assembly of priests, princes and nobles, the three names are put into a golden vase and one name is drawn out by the highest ecclesiastical authority present.

Thus was the new Panchan Lama chosen, eighteen years before he was installed on his throne at Tashilhunpo.

To the British, the possible influence of the Panchan Lama had been obscured by the immediate temporal power of the Dalai Lama, ruler of Lhasa and tool of the Russian monk Dorjief. Chanti, however, at his listening post on the frontier, suddenly discovered the possibilities of ignoring the Dalai Lama and dealing with his spiritual superior at Tashilhunpo. He regarded his discovery as strategically of the highest importance, and sought forthwith to turn the British thinking in this direction.

The activities of the frontier Intelligence Service had been growing steadily. Every tiniest bit of information from Tibet was combed and sifted for its possible bearing on the unknown dangers that threatened the advance of the Younghusband expedition. What was going on in Lhasa? What was the feeling of the Tibetan people toward the British? How many Russian rifles had reached the Tibetan capital? Were the monks of the great lamaseries quieting the people, or were they preaching armed resistance to the invader? Were there any signs of China actively interesting herself in the defence of Tibet?

Chanti was busy, day and night, interviewing refugees, traders, mule drivers and pilgrims. Few of them had anything of real importance, but there could be no let-up in the process of questioning them, laboriously and patiently, seeking for the occasional morsel of news that might be pieced with many others to make a little item of trustworthy information, helpful at army headquarters.

Owing to the closing of the caravan routes in the region where Younghusband was operating, Almorah had become the most important gateway between Tibet and India. Chanti spent the greater part of his day at the customs barrier, which was still formidably guarded by a company of the King's Own Rifles. He assisted in identifying the travellers who applied for admission into India, and he would pass no one until he had thoroughly cross-questioned him.

News of any Russian activity in Tibet was the information most urgently required by the British Staff. The great question mark in the whole Younghusband adventure was the possibility of Russian intervention, which might easily

mean war between England and Russia, a war which would unquestionably shake the peace of the world. This was the real reason for London's timidity: there were too many parallels between this exploit and the start of the Crimean War.

Younghusband's most vulnerable flank was not in the passes of the Himalayas, but on the diplomatic front, in such distant points as St. Petersburg and Peking. Nervous British ambassadors on these fronts, and even in Tokyo and Berlin, were seeking to protect the expedition, in *pourparlers* and conferences where the results were often so nebulous and intangible that no two men could interpret them alike.

British diplomats in St. Petersburg reported the Russian Government as cold toward Dorjjeff and the Tibetans. At least for the moment, the Great Bear was apparently occupied pretty fully with the Japanese intrigues which were to lead a year later to the Russo-Japanese War.

But Russian "coldness" in diplomacy was suspect. It had been too often used to divert attention from activities in which the element of surprise was important.

So it came about that in Almorah and at other points along the border, the most vigilant activity was being concentrated on any signs of Russian duplicity in Tibet. Younghusband, after the first skirmishes of the spring campaign, knew that he had little to fear from the Tibetan Army. But he would not have been surprised, at any time during his advance on Lhasa, to have found himself face to face with a superior force of Russians, secretly marched in from Fergana. The name of Dorjjeff was in the minds of British diplomats everywhere: it was common knowledge that he had twice carried to the Tsar his proposals for the Russianization of Tibet, but nobody knew how far he had gone with these plans or how far the two countries had committed themselves.

Chanti's attention was focused on the Panchan Lama by a purely adventitious circumstance. He had asked me to come to his house to meet a Tibetan trader who had just arrived in town with six heavily laden mules. Tsonam was an old acquaintance; in fact, he had been the leader of the group at the caravanserai when I first met Chanti and entered the *chela-guru* relationship with him.

No doubt Chanti expected to get from Tsonam a few minor

facts about the conditions in Tibet, but the reason I was invited to be present was that my *guru*, always pursuing his assiduous efforts to promote my education in Tibetan matters, planned to stage a long discussion of religion and government.

"I am going to show you the inside of a Tibetan's head," he explained, "and it won't do you any harm to get better acquainted with Tsonam, who is no ordinary person."

Our examination of the inside of his head started with a mutton stew and generous quantities of barley beer. A belt-loosening silence was followed by a lot of desultory conversation about trade, the weather and the crops. Each one asked the other exhaustively regarding his relatives, to the third and fourth generation, in true Oriental style.

Eventually Chanti got the conversation around to Lhasa, which Tsonam had left only a month before.

The British expedition was the sole topic of conversation in the market place, he said. There was a strong feeling against Dorjief, on the ground that he had brought on this military move, by leading the Dalai Lama to flirt with the Russians.

Tsonam seemed to be a little nervous about discussing such matters. He kept glancing at me, then questioningly at Chanati, until the latter was moved to explain the relationship between us, emphasizing that he was making a "true Tibetan patriot" out of me.

Somewhat reassured, Tsonam began a rambling discussion of the Tibetans' attitude toward foreigners. "We've always kept them out, until now, and that's the way we should do. Wherever a white man goes, an army follows."

Chanti turned the talk in the direction of the Tsong-du, the National Assembly which is the parliament of Tibet, composed of Lamaist monks and members of the thirty nobles families. Tsonam, as one of the latter, had attended some stormy sessions in the great stone hall of the Potala at Lhasa.

"Not even the Dalai Lama is strong enough to make us betray our country to the Russians," he said. "We would rather face his anger than give away the heritage of our sons to Dorjief's master from the north. The Dalai Lama asked us to support his plans and sign his treaty—but we would have none of it. We sent him back to his palace on the roof of the Potala, to pace in rage his stone-flagged terraces."

Chanti asked him many questions about the action of the Tsong-du, but it developed that the incident had occurred

some twenty months before, at an earlier stage of the Russo-Tibetan negotiations. The British advance had revived the whole bitter matter in the minds of the Lhassans.

Tsonam had no very high opinion of the Dalai Lama. The latter had been administering things with an iron hand since his defeat by the National Assembly.

"He is a cruel man, and ordinary people have become fearful even of expressing their opinions. There have been plenty of banishments, imprisonments and tortures during the past two years. Many who oppose him have been sent away, and their property confiscated—even some of the *sha-pes* (cabinet ministers). He is hotheaded and ruthless."

Chanti recalled that there had been rumours of murders at the time the Dalai Lama came to his throne, ten or twelve years before. Tsonam laughed a grim laugh.

"I can tell you that story too," he said, "for my own brother was in the palace service at the time. The Dalai Lama, who has a terrible temper, found himself hampered by the sound advice given him by the abbot who had been regent. So he accused the abbot of witchcraft, charging that the latter had sewed a curse-paper into the sole of the lama's new boots. The abbot and seven of his relatives were thrown into a dungeon, and that was the last of them."

Tsonam confessed that he himself, although he had powerful friends, was a bit afraid of the Dalai Lama's vindictiveness, and planned to remain in India for the time being. He waxed more and more eloquent as he went on with many particulars of the ruler's unpleasant qualities.

"I don't see how he can last very long, though," he predicted, thoughtfully. "His friends grow fewer day by day; his enemies stronger and more numerous."

He paused and drew a deep cloud of smoke into his lungs. After a few moments he observed slowly:

"After all, he is not the greatest of our incarnations. He must always rank second to the Panchan Lama, whom everybody worships. He should be our ruler . . . perhaps one day he will be."

Chanti, who had been rather bored by the long monologue about the well-known frailties of the Dalai Lama, showed sudden signs of interest.

"Ah, yes," he said, "I have heard from the pilgrims a good

PALACE OF THE DALAI LAMA

(Illustration facing page 96)

Centre of the temporal power of Tibet is the Potala, monastery residence of the Dalai Lama, at Lhasa. The white portions of the great structure are residences for the monks and acolytes attached to the Dalai's household. The dark central portion contains the Jokhang (cathedral), where important religious ceremonies are held and where the Tibetan Tsong-du (Parliament) meets. In the centre of this six-story structure can be seen the great red yak-wool curtain hanging from the roof; it is 160 feet long and 80 feet wide. . . . The actual residence of the Dalai is a pent-house palace occupying the entire roof of the central building: it has broad lawns and terraces, and its many domes are overlaid with a covering of Tibetan gold, shining in the sun and visible for many miles along the pilgrim roads leading to Lhasa.

A CORNER OF THE LAMA PANTHEON

(Illustration facing page 97)

The Dalai and Panchan Lamas meet on the altar of a Tibetan temple. . . . The 60-foot figure on the left is Avalokiteswara, here represented with ten heads and a thousand hands. The smaller figures at his feet, together with the large bronze figure seated on the adjoining pedestal, are representations of Amitabha, spiritual head of the Lamaist religion. The 60-foot figure is the god whose living reincarnation is the Dalai Lama; the small figures are the supreme being whose living reincarnation is the Panchan Lama. . . . The attendant female figures on the right carry out the idea of the temple's guardianship of fertility and procreation—they are pregnant women standing in front of a painted background depicting heaven, with a highly conventionalized version of roads and mountains.





deal about the Panchan Lama. But he is a mere boy. He will do well to keep out of the Dalai Lama's way."

For an hour they exchanged the information that they had heard about the Tashilhunpo incarnation. The Panchan Lama, it appeared, was a young man of philosophical and kindly character. He was modest and aware of his immaturity, inclined to go slow in the use of his power until he was more experienced. But he showed signs of leadership; he selected his advisers wisely and used their advice with great good sense.

I was less interested in these general encomiums than in the description of his daily audiences with pilgrims. Here I was able to contribute something to the conversation. More than a year before I had seen that long column of Nepalese pilgrims, poor and ragged, as they passed through Almorah on their way to Tashilhunpo to seek the lama's blessing, headed by their own local incarnation, a weazened old man under a yellow umbrella. I had seen them on their return, decimated by the hardships of the trail, but visibly exalted by their religious triumph and the certainty that the scourge of wolves was broken. I had talked with some of the pilgrims and had sensed their fanatical admiration for the Panchan Lama.

They had told me about their arrival in Tashilhunpo—how they had been immediately received, instead of being kept waiting for days, as was often the case with pilgrims who sought audience of the Dalai Lama at Lhassa. They had filled the courtyard of the central monastery, after visiting the five monumental tombs of former incarnations and setting awirl the great bronze prayer wheels there. In the courtyard, under the guidance of two hundred monks from the lama's entourage, they had filed past the elevated throne where His Serenity sat, cross-legged on a yellow satin pillow.

The humble pilgrims expected no more than a perfunctory touch of their offered scarves with his wand as they passed him. This, indeed, was sufficient honour for any pilgrim, and would bring him the reverence of his fellow villagers for the rest of his life. But the young lama was more gracious than any man would have believed possible. He had actually laid his hand upon the uncovered head of each pilgrim, an honour usually reserved for holy men and high officials.

With such a blessing, the Nepalese pilgrims had left Tashilhunpo with a lofty exaltation that would make life sweeter, safer and happier for them until the blessed end should come and their souls be released into the perfection of Nirvana.

It was our long discussion of the Panchan Lama's virtues that inspired Chanti with the thought that perhaps out of the British expedition might come the end of the Dalai Lama's tyrannical rule and the beginning of a new day under the progressive young ruler from Tashilhunpo. If this could be brought about, Younghusband's adventure would prove a benefit to Tibet.

Chanti spent the next two days writing out a formal report to the British Intelligence as to the popular admiration in Tibet for the Panchan Lama, the characteristics of the young man, and the advantages that would accrue to the British from dealing with him rather than with their avowed enemy, the Dalai Lama.

A dozen times he rewrote his letter, polishing the phrases of his formal Urdu until it sparkled like a chapter from a holy book. When it was finally done, he read it to me, slowly and impressively. I was curiously moved by the deep sincerity of the document and predicted that it would succeed in its purpose.

Chanti shook his head dubiously. "I am not sure. It is a message of peace, and the soldiers listen only to those who preach fighting. General MacDonald will not like it, but Captain O'Connor will perhaps see some wisdom in it. What will be, will be."

The results were, I suppose, disappointing. Chanti received no acknowledgment from Darjeeling of the receipt of his letter, nor was there any request for further information.

But there were others in India, wise heads among the makers of British policy, who had thoughts similar to Chanti's, although I doubt whether any of them had charted a course so direct and clear as that urged by my *guru*. The name of the Panchan Lama began to be seen in the public prints, and to be heard in council chambers. Younghusband made it quietly evident that he had no quarrel with Tashilhunpo, and in return received an equally quiet assurance that the Panchan Lama and his soldiers would take no part in the hostilities,

The British column, after three battles fought on the highest battlefields of history, arrived in Lhasa. The Dalai Lama fled to Mongolia, accompanied by Dorjjeff, whose promises of Russian assistance had proved empty.

Younghusband, after four weeks of negotiations, persuaded the National Assembly to sign the desired treaty, banishing the Russian Bear from the Tibetan plateaux. The signing took place on "the 22d day of the seventh moon in the 30th year of Kuangshu."

I well remember the breath-taking astonishment with which we read the terms of the treaty, when it first reached us. The closed walls of the Hermit Kingdom were no more. For the first time in history, Tibet was opened—at least in a limited way—to the foreigner.

To us at Almorah, every stilted phrase and formal clause of the diplomatic language had a background of picturesque meaning. I remember Jowar's chuckle as he read the very first clause, which required the Tibetans to replace the boundary stones they had overturned along the frontier. Jowar had always felt keenly the "insult to the Raj" in these repeated acts of vandalism, and he took the typically Oriental view that reparation for this attack on the *izzat* (honour) of India was the most important feature of the document.

For me there was an overwhelming significance to the paragraph which provided for a partial opening of the Gartok gold fields. Even in the heavy language of diplomacy, the words had a sparkle and a tingle: "Tibet agrees to establish a mart at Kotako (Gartok) for the purpose of mutual trading between British and Tibetan merchants at their free convenience."

The customs barrier at Almorah was to be torn down, for it was agreed that "on the route between the Indian frontier and Gyantse and Gartok, no customs stations may be established, and on these routes traversed by merchants all forts shall be demolished, and Tibet shall repair any dangerous places on the road in order to facilitate travel."

As to the gold fields, Russian greed was suitably restrained by a clause providing that "without the consent of Great Britain no Tibetan property shall be sold, leased or mortgaged to any foreign power; no foreign power shall be permitted to concern itself with the administration of the government of Tibet or to send either official or non-official persons to Tibet

or to construct roads, railways or telegraphs; and no land containing minerals or precious metals shall be mortgaged, exchanged, leased or sold to any foreign power."

It was not until the treaty had been signed that the British made any formal approach to the Panchan Lama. He had taken no part in developments at Lhassa, carefully keeping himself aloof from the negotiations, remaining in his lofty palace 200 miles away, from which he quietly watched the progress of events.

But the flight of the Dalai Lama automatically transferred the headship of the state to Tashilhunpo. The consummation, that Chanti had desired, and which he had sought to guide in his carefully written letter to Darjeeling, had come to pass—not exactly as he had planned it, but in a way equally effective.

The Panchan Lama was now the supreme ruler of Tibet.

CHAPTER NINE

BATTLE OF THE FALLING PARAPETS

When a lazy monk is stirred
Vengeance is not long deferred.

—*Yak Herders' Saying*

FOR five years the young Panchan Lama ruled Tibet so serenely and wisely that the country which had been regarded for years in world capitals as a focus of dangerous possibilities was hardly ever heard from, having happily lapsed into the oblivion of peace.

There is an old Latin saying, which has its counterpart also in Oriental literature, that "blessed is the nation whose annals are few." Tibet under the Panchan Lama was a modern example of the truth of that proverb. Historians will never give much space to this period, because everything moved along with such smoothness that there is little to put on the record. Neither at home nor abroad, neither in domestic nor in foreign relations, was there any friction to make newspaper headlines. The treaty with Great Britain was scrupulously observed; the historic suzerainty of China was respected in the regular payment of the appointed tribute to Peking; all approaches from Russia were politely but firmly discouraged. Internally, the new ruler's attitude toward his subjects was benevolent, tolerant and just.

No sudden reforms in social or political practice were permitted to trouble the people. The Panchan Lama, although progressively-minded, sought improvement through evolution rather than revolution. He was a teacher and leader, but he felt that the upward path for the Tibetans must be a gradual one. Violent change was repellent to him, as he knew it would be to the great mass of his subjects. He was content that his people should keep their fealty to the old concepts and traditions, but he patiently pointed out little alterations in emphasis and application that would eventually lay a foundation for desirable reform.

At no time did he regard himself as anything more than a "locum tenens" for the absent Dalai Lama. He did not move to Lhasa, but governed from his own palace at Tashilhunpo. This enabled him to keep aloof from the poison of political intrigue that still permeated the old capital and stultified the activities of the monks and nobles who had been the willing tools of the former ruler. But he made no effort to displace these men; in fact, he won their co-operation by convincing them that he would welcome the Dalai's return at any time, and would then cheerfully go back to his former role of spiritual leader. Such an attitude on the part of an Oriental potentate was so unusual that many of the officials at Lhasa were inclined to suspect something wrong with his head. "A little mad," they said of him, at least in the first year of his rule, as they marvelled at the emptiness of the dungeons and the lack of employment for the executioner's sword.

The Panchan Lama kept up a personal correspondence with the Dalai, who was hiding in the palace of the Mongolian incarnation at Urga, deathly afraid of British vengeance. The Panchan's reassuring letters fell on deaf ears, for the savage-hearted Dalai could not conceive of a conqueror who did not thirst for the blood of his enemy. For five years the Dalai cringed in cowardly terror, in his self-imposed exile, before the truth of the Panchan's words began to penetrate his thick skull.

In Almorah, my training in things Tibetan went on steadily, with Chanti and Tsonam as my guides and teachers. As for the rest of my education, I had my daily lessons from my parents and English governess in the basic and fundamental Western matters of reading, writing and arithmetic. These lessons began to open before me the world of history and literature, but Chanti's influence was so strong that I unconsciously interpreted it all in terms of Tibet. The heroes of Dumas, Scott, Fenimore Cooper and Nathaniel Hawthorne I saw as though they were Tibetan gold washers, yak hunters, monks and soldiers. My favourite historical characters were Alfred the Great, King Arthur, Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, all of whom I pictured as somehow similar in personality to the Panchan Lama.

On several occasions I proposed to Chanti a trip to the

Gartok gold fields, which continued to have a strong hold on my imagination. But travel into Tibet was still impossible. The British were insisting on a scrupulous observance of their part of the treaty. Even the clauses regarding the "opening" of Gartok meant merely a free exchange of merchandise. They did not mean that British and Indian merchants could accompany their goods into the forbidden land.

A few British officials, carefully chosen for their tact and politeness, visited Tibet, and there were British "residents" representing the diplomatic service at Lhasa, Gartok, Gyantse and Yatung. But the ordinary traveller was barred from crossing the frontier, and the prohibition against him was enforced with the full co-operation of both British and Tibetan Governments.

So my plans for visiting Gartok came to naught. I think Chanti might have managed it, if he had wanted to do so. But he saw the dangers of the trip more clearly than I, and felt that they outweighed any possible advantages.

One of the unexpected results of the Younghusband treaty was an increase of banditry on the trade routes in Tibet. The treaty had provided for the demolition of all the *jongs* along the caravan trails, and the Panchan Lama had carried out this provision with exemplary thoroughness. The original intention had been to insure that the Tibetan Government, particularly the little local units, would not interfere with trade; but the first effect was to remove all restraint from the activities of robbers.

The Tibetan Government was not equipped to cope with this development. Here, as in all parts of the Orient, law and order could be maintained only so far as some kind of actual physical force could be projected.

All sorts of stories regarding the activities of the bandits began to reach Almorah, with bullet wounds and rifled caravans to prove that there was at least some basis for the tales. There was a powerful group of outlaws on the Gartok road, under a robber baron named Gadun, which was reaping a rich harvest by ambushing the camel trains carrying gold and other merchandise. A lone bandit who operated near the Karakorum Pass was widely feared for his adeptness at blocking narrow defiles and levying tribute on the traders by various daring devices. Then there was a band on the

Darjeeling road, reputed to be led by a woman, a renegade nun who was supposed to have reversed the *Arabian Nights* procedure by killing a fresh husband every morning.

The Panchan Lama, lacking any well-organized police force, hit upon the happy idea of asking the monasteries to clean up the bandits. Most of them, it is true, were lamentable failures in their efforts to deal with the outlaws, and many of them never got beyond the point of firing a daily fusillade of paper prayers. But here and there one of the monasteries, fortunate in leadership, had a notable success.

It was not leadership, however, but a complete lack of leadership that accounted for the "Battle of Ghiré Kangura" (falling parapets). The story has since become almost a classic along the border, being even recorded in the familiar hyperboles of the wandering minstrels, who have as many poetic versions of it as Americans have of "Casey Jones" or "Mademoiselle from Armentières." I remember the tale as I heard it one night in the caravanseraï at Almorah, rendered in a rich hillman's baritone by a blind bard, to the accompaniment of his seven-stringed *sitar*:

Then, one by one, he seized his foes and tossed them into space,
First being very certain that he'd pushed in every face. . . .

He picked up boulders big enough to hide the tallest tower
And kept these missiles flying at a dozen to the hour. . . .

In half a day he broke more heads than anyone before
Had e'er been known to crack or crush in many months of war. . . .

Trees he uprooted with one yank, then sent them hurtling down
At anyone that laughed at him, or even dared to frown. . . .

He killed so many enemies that soon there were not quite
Enough alive to face him in a fair and decent fight. . . .

The actual facts of the battle are quite as dramatic as their poetic elaboration. Bon-gompa was a small monastery in an obscure spot near the headwaters of the Brahmaputra River. Although it housed only fifteen or twenty monks, it had a great reputation as a place of pilgrimage, being called in India the "Shrine of Kings." Its sacred pool, with the figure of Buddha carved in the stone bottom, had been visited by many

rajahs and maharajahs, together with thousands of lesser gentry, all bearing gifts which made the life of the monks comfortable and easy.

Towering above the sacred pool, the monastery itself was built against an almost perpendicular cliff, approached through a narrow defile down which the sacred river thundered its deep boulder-strewn course. The trail was on the opposite side of the river, and access to the monastery was over a swaying rope bridge, like a cat's cradle, stretched between the high river banks, sixty feet above the water. From the bridge, visitors entered the main courtyard through iron-bound oak gates. The pool was in the centre of the courtyard, fed by hidden springs which sent a constantly bubbling current of water over the recumbent form of Buddha in such a way as to make it appear that the stone image was alive and breathing.

Above the courtyard the monastery buildings rose for five stories of solid rock walls, broken only by square-cut open windows, which had never known glass but were closed in rough weather by curtains of yak wool. The upper story was surmounted by a crenelated parapet, in the style of European castles or American National Guard armouries.

The roomy lower stories were given over to the accommodation of pilgrims; the upper floors served as residence for the monks and storerooms for their patiently accumulated "treasure."

The season of pilgrimage at Bon-gompa was brief, owing to its altitude and comparative inaccessibility. For nearly nine months of the year the monks lived in solitude, except for occasional native hunters or gold washers who happened to wander their way. In winter the abbot, accompanied by two or three subordinates, went to Lhasa and Tashilhunpo to attend the National Assembly, to hand in the reports, to deliver the annual tribute and to make a round of the holy places.

The Panchan Lama's request to the monasteries to do police duty against the bandits arrived at Bon-gompa toward the end of the pilgrimage season. Now it happened that a band of robbers had been somewhat active along the pilgrim trail, and the abbot was already much annoyed with them, fearing that they might frighten away some of his best "customers." The Panchan Lama's message stirred him to action, and word was

sent to the bandit chief, by devious means, that he must leave the district or suffer dire consequences.

Whereupon the bandit chief had the temerity to dispatch a message to the abbot, bluntly demanding protection, on the ground that he had thus far carefully refrained from robbing any of the pilgrims and would continue to do so if the abbot would co-operate with him a bit on his other affairs. This message was accompanied by a lavish gift, consisting of five fat-tailed sheep.

But the abbot, a short-tempered disciplinarian, would have none of it. He not only returned the gift—this act in itself being an insult of no mean proportions—but also informed the uncouth messenger that unless his master obeyed the command to leave the district a deadly curse paper would be prepared against him and pasted on the gate of the monastery. The placing of a yellow curse paper in such a position would be feared by an ordinary Tibetan almost as much as a death sentence.

However, the bandit leader was no ordinary Tibetan. Impudent and unafraid, he made no reply to the abbot's declaration of war, but inwardly he determined to have his revenge; forthwith he posted a man on the cliff above the monastery, without the knowledge of the monks, to keep watch for some suitable opportunity.

Meanwhile the abbot, satisfied that the measures he had taken had been effective, left for Tashilhunpo with his retinue, to report to the Panchan Lama that banditry had been banished from his district. The remaining fourteen monks settled down to their winter's routine, devoting their energies during the first few weeks to cutting and carrying aloft the vast supply of fuel needed for their long months of bitter cold. They closed off the pilgrims' quarters on the lower floors, and hung the yak-wool curtains in the windows of the upper rooms which they would inhabit until summer came again.

Every morning and every evening, the whole group of fourteen monks would solemnly inspect the paper seals which the abbot had placed over the doors of the various storerooms and treasure rooms. But they failed to inspect their little armoury of wirebound guns, swords and spears, which constituted their only means of defence—this failure being due to the fact that Bon-gompa had never in the memory of the oldest monk found occasion to use any of its weapons.

In point of fact, the weapons were pretty nearly valueless from rust and disuse, and had long since been relegated to a small room in one of the wings.

A few days after the abbot's departure the bandit chief decided the time had come to strike. Arriving while the monks were busily engaged in eating their noonday meal in the third-floor assembly hall, he crossed the bridge with thirty men and was in the courtyard of the monastery before the monks were aware of his presence.

An acolyte, looking out of the third-floor kitchen window, saw the armed strangers entering the courtyard and raised the alarm. Hurriedly several of the priests ran down the stone staircases and barred the doors. Nobody knew quite what was happening, but the closing of the doors had seemed to somebody the right thing.

The assistant abbot was a dithering old man, well past eighty. He had to be supported to a window, to listen to the clamour that the bandit chief was making. The latter, in a loud voice, was demanding immediate admission to the monastery.

"Hospitality, for me and my men!" he shouted, over and over again.

The old assistant abbot looked querulously at his subordinates, asking their counsel. His voice was so weak that he couldn't make himself heard over the noise that came up from below, reinforced by the excited chattering of his own followers, who were completely unnerved. They were a stupid lot, softened by years of easy living, completely useless in an emergency.

And perhaps the stupidest of them, at least in his outward appearance, was Hsia Gelong, a huge hulk of a man eminent in nothing save prodigious feats of eating and drinking. He could outeat, outdrink and outbelch any monk from Tashilhunpo to Kumbum. In the present situation, he showed practically no interest in the goings-on in the courtyard below, which he felt were none of his affair. He had abandoned a bowl of warm *tsamba* paste in the hall, just to come and look, and now he decided to leave matters to the assistant abbot and go back to his mutton.

Meanwhile the bandit chief was getting visibly more and more angry. His men were making the rounds of the doors,

banging on them and seeking a weak spot where they could break in.

Their leader now decided to issue a ultimatum.

"Silence!" he commanded, and when no silence ensued, he shot off his wirebound gun into the air and secured prompt attention.

Shaking his fist at the old assistant abbot, in the window above, he delivered his terms. Unless he was admitted to the monastery "in the time it takes to drink a bowl of tea," he would break in, and then he would not be responsible for the safety of anybody. But if he were admitted peacefully, he would see to it that not a hair of any monk's head was harmed.

The assistant abbot had never made a real decision in his life, and the task of making one now, in the brief time allowed him, was more than his feeble mind could achieve. He attempted a council of war, but every monk promptly became a frightened commander-in-chief and the net result was merely bedlam.

Hsia Gelong, returning from his *tsamba*, was a grinning spectator in the doorway. Gathering from their hectic conversation that a time limit had been set on their deliberations, he jokingly urged them to take a vote.

The assistant abbot noted that Hsia seemed to be the only cool individual in the monastery and appealed to him for his opinion.

"What would you suggest we do?" he demanded.

Hsia's only inclination was to get away from this hubbub and have a nap in the sun.

"Why not go up on the roof, where we can't hear those wolves howling?" he suggested lazily.

The idea instantly seemed a good one to everybody. Instead of answering the bandit's ultimatum, they would take the characteristic course of evading the issue. What would be, would be. If the robbers broke into the treasure rooms, there was nothing to do about it. Nobody thought of the old guns and spears in the armoury, or of attempting any real defence.

The whole crowd swarmed up the stairway to the roof. Here, from the parapet, they peered down upon the invaders.

Hsia, whose outlook on life was always casually flippant,

leaned over and shouted a few good-natured taunts at the enemy. These got plenty of attention from below, and in no time at all there began a spirited battle of vivid profanity, in which the honours were heavily with Hsia.

When it comes to cursing, a Tibetan monk is hard to beat. And strong-lunged profanity was one of Hsia's specialities. He went into the ancestry of the bandits in great detail, flinging his insults upon relatives for dozens of generations back. The bandit chief's mother, for instance, was credited by Hsia with having possessed nine noses—and the curse of the nine noses, as everybody realizes, is just about the last word in Tibetan Billingsgate. The bandit chief himself was a vulture—an eater of dead men—which is a fighting word anywhere in the Lamaist world.

The battle of profanity lasted so long that it almost seemed the bandits had forgotten their ultimatum. But all at once the chief remembered it, and ordered his men to crash the doors. They made a battering ram of themselves—a row of ten men against the main door, and started to work.

Meanwhile one of the bandit sentries, at the far side of the courtyard, had got so annoyed with Hsia's abuse that he decided to take a potshot at the fat monk, who certainly offered an ample target. He aimed at Hsia's stomach, and succeeded in sending a bullet through the monk's hat. It jumped off the priestly head and was caught in a breeze which carried it back into the courtyard, where the sentry proudly retrieved it as a trophy.

Hsia was a quiet man, not easily aroused. But this was too much. His hat was his badge of office; its loss was like the loss of a regimental standard. In the twinkling of an eye he changed from a man of inaction to one of the most surprising energy. Rather than let that accursed sentry have the best of him, he was willing to lay aside all lethargy. It must have been his subconscious self that had been insulted, for it was certainly his subconscious self that acted now.

Hunching his shoulders, he leaned mightily against the nearest stone of the parapet, shoving with all his oxlike strength. Something had to give way. There came a creak and then a cracking. Suddenly the stone yielded and crashed irresistibly downward on the heads of the line of men at the door below.

It had the effect of an earthquake. Three men went down

under it. The others bumped heads in their effort to get to cover.

The bandit chief was struck dumb by this audacity. After a few moments of hesitation he rallied his followers and ordered them to get out their guns and "shoot to kill."

But meanwhile Hsia, in his new character of *generalissimo*, started organizing his comrades. His act, however, had taken the starch completely out of them. They cowered in terror, thinking of the revenge the bandits would surely exact.

Hsia had no time for cowards. With a series of long swings of his big foot, he kicked each cowering monk from his crouching position. It was a language the monks understood. A timid lama would rather risk the somewhat remote threat of bandit reprisals than the immediate danger of a well-aimed foot. In no time at all General Hsia had a group of obedient followers.

With the sudden magic of leadership, coming from hidden springs within him that had certainly never functioned before, Hsia assigned his men to stations around the roof, bidding them protect themselves from gun-fire behind the crenelated parapets.

From below there came now the steady crackle of the wire-bound guns, but the bullets either went overhead or smacked futilely against the stones.

Presently the bandit chief decided that the only way to dislodge the monks was to make another assault on the doors. A fresh battering ram of men was set in line far out in the courtyard, and was started on the run for the doorway.

But Hsia was alert. Not one rock, but three, he had ready for this advance. The rocks were already tipped upward in the hands of obedient monks, ready to be pushed over the edge of the roof at his signal. The priests were protected by the rocks themselves from snipers, and Hsia's instructions were that they were to drop flat on their stomachs as soon as they released the big boulders.

On came the human battering ram. Hsia watched it until it was no more than three swift paces from the door. Then he gave his signal. Three giant stones crashed to the pavement, bursting into fragments with a shock that shook the whole courtyard and building.

The silence that might have followed was broken by the groans and screams of stricken men. Two of the members of

the battering line lay cold and lifeless, five others were *hors de combat*.

Strangely enough, Hsia's comrades displayed no joy of victory. In fact, they had begun to recover from their first fear-inspired courage and were now weak with fright. They urged Hsia to desist and capitulate. Several of them suddenly conjured up the horrible conviction that fragments of the falling stones had crashed into the sacred pool—and if anything happened to the image of Buddha, a fate worse than death surely awaited them all.

Hsia had no ears for their craven protests. He was filled with the lust of battle. Leaning over the parapet, he taunted the bandits with loud hoarse cries.

The bandit chief had, as a matter of fact, had enough. With five men killed and as many more badly hurt, he was ready to retire. But Hsia's taunts aroused him for one more try. Hastily he organized another battering ram, stationing the rest of his band far out in the courtyard with their guns carefully aimed.

There was a certain pardonable reluctance on the part of the men appointed for the task of crashing the gate. Nobody wanted to be in the front of the line. Their chief argued, cajoled, threatened, but the response was a sullen shaking of heads.

When the line was finally arranged, and the bandit chief gave the signal, nothing happened. Not a man moved. The chief, faced with mutiny, turned to his sharpshooters, and ordered them to fire a volley at the roof, hoping thus to drive the defenders back and encourage his own men. One of the monks was hit this time, and tumbled to the roof, his fall clearly visible from below. A shout went up from the snipers.

This encouraged the battering line, and it started forward. But half-way to the doorway, Hsia dropped a warning stone, the largest of them all, and when it hit the pavement the advancing line broke and turned back.

The man who had been in the front position went suddenly mad with the terror of what might have happened to him if he had been beneath that great rock. Running over to one of the sharpshooters, he seized the man's gun, pointed it straight at the chief's breast, and from five paces fired.

That was the end of the Battle of the Falling Parapets. The bandits fled, and when the abbot reported to the Panchan Lama that his district was free of bandits he was telling the literal truth.

A MONGOLIAN FOLLOWER OF THE PANCHAN

(Illustration facing page 112)

Throughout the Panchan Lama's period of exile in Mongolia, he was able to count on the support of millions of loyal followers among the sturdy nomads who roam the steppes and deserts. The photograph shows a typical Lamaist of the region around the monastery of Peilingmiao (Temple of a Hundred Miracles), whence the pontiff directed his successful campaign against the Japanese invaders. It was a remarkable campaign, involving no use of violence. For the most part, the Japanese armed raiders encountered little resistance. The nomads, men of the type here shown, melted before the invaders, retreating with their herds. But as soon as a raiding party left a given area, the nomads returned. It was exactly like poking one's finger into a rubber balloon. . . . The Mongol shown in the photograph carries a characteristic amulet of turquoise-studded bronze: it is constructed like a miniature shrine, containing an image of Amitabha, whose living incarnation is the Panchan Lama.

MONGOLIAN MUSICIANS

(Illustration facing page 113)

Monks from the Peilingmiao monastery, resting between orchestral numbers at a spring festival. The instrument which they play is a set of reeds with fourteen pipes; it is played with the nostril, which is placed against the clay "mouthpiece" at the bottom of the instrument. The effect is a plaintive and very uncertain tone, carried by the instrumentalist's skilful fingering on the holes at the base of the pipes. . . . The shoulder capes are of bright brocaded silk, with crimson and gold appliqué. The red hats, with bright orange coxcombs of wool, have been removed and turned into sunshades—ordinarily they are worn like Greek helmets. The crowd in the background is composed of devout Lamaists from far and near, who greatly admire the clothes and performances of the priests.





CHAPTER TEN

PONTIFFS IN INDIA

Formula for strife and stress :
Put a rogue in soldier's dress,
Elevate him then to power,
And await The Evil Hour.

—*Book of Hillmen's Maxims*

GOD in human form saw his first railway train one fine spring day in Darjeeling. He talked over a telephone for the first time at the British viceregal lodge a few days later. And no more than a fortnight afterward he looked at an American motion picture, featuring Indians, cowboys, New York policemen and firemen, custard pies and other characteristic products of Western civilization.

The Panchan Lama was a refugee on British soil, and with him was the Dalai Lama, whose return from exile had promptly ended Tibet's five years of peace. A single year of the Dalai's rule had set the country into a turmoil, had brought on an invading Chinese Army, and had forced the two incarnations to flee for sanctuary to India, over the very trails Younghusband's sappers had built seven years before.

Chanti was called immediately to Darjeeling upon the arrival of the Grand Lamas with their numerous retinues. He remained there, with occasional visits to Almorah, throughout their stay in exile. His role was that of an interpreter, court chamberlain and handy man, and he was also expected to file frequent reports of his activities with his superiors in the Intelligence.

The two incarnations were official and personal guests of the British Raj. No pain or expense was spared to make them comfortable and happy, for England's future relations with Tibet might depend in no small measure on the relations thus established. A Lamaist temple, complete and authentic in every respect, with living quarters for monks and acolytes, was hastily built and put at their disposal. Each of the

pontiffs was provided with suitable living quarters. A guard of honour and an escort surrounded each of them, lending the proper dignity to their comings and goings. Their movements were reported lavishly in the Indian newspapers, and even in the daily dispatches to the London press.

Yet none of the newspaper accounts told the really significant story. The two incarnations for the first time in their lives were in personal contact with Western civilization. The Dalai Lama, it is true, had been in Urga and Peking, but Urga was as primitive as Lhasa, and in Peking he had been the guest of the dominating old Empress Dowager and had hardly been permitted to leave the confines of the imperial palace. As for the Panchan Lama, his only knowledge of the outside world had been from reading a few ancient books, which had brought him only a little beyond the exploits of Attila, Kublai Khan and Tamerlane.

So the really interesting news about the visitors to India, which the papers failed to carry, was their reaction to the marvels which began to meet their eyes and ears. The real question was: How would these things affect their thinking, and what would be the effects on the future of Tibet?

I can answer in detail only for the Panchan Lama, because Chanti's relations were almost wholly with this side of the dual establishments set up in Darjeeling. While the two pontiffs met frequently, and kept up the closest friendship and contact throughout their thirty months of Indian exile, their whole outlook on life was different. The Dalai's mind was fixed on getting back into power, and his interests were military and political, with an eye single for revenge on the Chinese who had driven him out of Tibet. The Panchan, serene in the knowledge that he was still undisputed spiritual head of Lamaism throughout the world, had the open mind of an eager child for the new wonders that were spread before him. Fate had brought him to India, he believed, to see and learn, to grow in the knowledge of God and man.

Entering for the first time the terraced village of Darjeeling, the Panchan's initial comment was one of astonishment at the glass windows and doors of the houses. Glass is a scarce commodity in Tibet, being used only in small quantities in very special places. It must be imported, and the treacheries of the trail do not permit its shipment in any great amount.

Within his new living quarters there were all sorts of marvels—mirrors, oil lamps, running water, chiming clocks, fireplaces. All of these were new, strange luxuries. Chairs, tables and beds were unaccustomed novelties to a man who had always sat, eaten and slept on stone floors.

The Dalai Lama, whose one brief year of rule had been characterized by a rapidly growing megalomania in which he visualized himself as a monarch more autocratic than Genghis Khan, had eyes for none of these "minor" products of civilization. The one thing that attracted his attention was the British military machine—guns, uniforms, transport on wheels, cannon and fortifications, flags awave, bands playing, marching men and prancing chargers.

But the Panchan Lama's outlook was more human. Not the panoply of war, but the machinery of living interested him.

A characteristic example was his first experience with a railway train. At his request, the British had arranged for him to take a ride from Darjeeling to Siliguri, twelve miles down the mountain. A "special car" was attached to the train, suitably decorated with bunting of lama yellow.

The railway from Darjeeling to Siliguri was narrow-gauge cog-wheel. The trains consisted of engine, tender, and as many as five light wooden cars, including both "goods wagons" and narrow passenger coaches in the style of American summer tram-cars. The engines were diminutive wood burners, with six driving wheels which were largely window dressing, as the main traction came from a central cog wheel underneath the locomotive, which meshed with a rail in the centre of the track. The engines puffed furiously, and exerted the limit of their power to achieve a speed of six to eight miles an hour on the steep grades and sharp curves. It was all pretty primitive and antiquated.

But the Panchan Lama was as delighted as a child on a roller coaster. Without self-consciousness or any sense of fear he boarded the "foreign fire wagon" and thrilled with excitement as the engine slowly and painfully got under way. He had a hillman's delight in the sheer precipices which fell away from the window of the swaying car, and he grinned with pleasure at the hollow echoes that came up from deep ravines as the train crossed long spidery steel bridges.

"I know how an eagle feels," he said to Chanti, who under-

stood from his expression that in this experience he knew for the first time the stimulating combination of height and speed.

As for the motion pictures, His Serenity had the pleasure of a special "command" performance. Motion pictures were still in their infancy, and in these remote parts of India they took on the importance of a theatrical road show. There were only a few projectors in all India, and these were mostly portable outfits which toured the outlying districts and showed for a day or two before moving on to their next stop.

The "exhibition" at Darjeeling was one I had seen the previous week at Naini Tal. It was a one-man show, transported in four trunks. One of these contained the projecting machine, another the wiring and the canvas curtain, the other two the gas-engine generator which supplied the necessary electric current.

Any large hall served as theatre. The only such hall available in Darjeeling was the Union church, and the motion picture man had rented this on a percentage basis, splitting fifty-fifty with the padre. The special showing for the Panchan Lama was given in the afternoon, with the windows darkened by a fatigue party of sappers specially assigned to this duty by the garrison commander. It never occurred to anybody that this was the lama's first, and only, visit to a Christian church.

Chanti, who had never himself seen a motion picture, tried to explain the phenomenon to the pontiff. The first thing that had to be interpreted, before ever a picture reached the screen, was the sputtering of the hot arc light that provided the illumination for the lantern. Chanti was pretty hard pressed to do this, having had little experience himself with the "magic light."

Then came the first picture. It was in Buffalo Bill style and showed one of his many imitators in a ferocious battle with heavily feathered redskins. Horses, the exchange of rifle fire, and the rescue of a blonde heroine were the features of this one-reel "special." Chanti fell back on some of my conversations regarding the writings of Fenimore Cooper, and explained American Indians in great—if slightly fantastic—detail to the lama. The exploits of the horses interested His Serenity enormously, and when the film was finished, he ordered it to run again and yet again, to be sure that he had

caught the exact technique of a group of mounted cowboys that had slid down an almost perpendicular cliff, carrying both their riders and the unconscious heroine to safety.

"Those are real mountains," said the lama. "America has many resemblances to Tibet, although their horses are bigger and there is more fighting. I can see that they are a generous people, even in battle."

The next reel, however, gave him another side of American life. It was one of those early films which were always carefully labelled "comedy" so that there could be no mistake in interpretation. This particular example contained galloping fire horses, a Ferris wheel at Coney Island, a chase in the elevators of an office building, and a prolonged custard pie battle between two allegedly humorous characters. Chanti translated the titles into Tibetan, but the rapid progress of the film left the lama and his entourage more agasp than tickled. Practically none of the pictures meant anything to them. The purpose of the galloping fire horses was not within their comprehension, any more than the Ferris wheel or the little boxes which were called "elevators" in English, but had no equivalent word in Tibetan. As for custard pie, Chanti himself did not know what it was, but gathered that it was something to eat, and translated it as "American *tsamba*." The throwing of the first pie horrified the audience—it appeared to be a new kind of deadly insult, beyond the wildest imagination of a Tibetan. The lama and his followers tried to picture to themselves the strain of living among a people who threw food into each other's faces, but their minds failed them. Chanti tried to explain that it was all a kind of American "fun," but their facial expressions indicated that such conduct was in taste that could not possibly appeal to them.

The final number of the programme was a "scenic," consisting of a series of sea pictures, including the loading of a ship, a rescue in a breeches buoy, and finally a picture of an aeroplane flying over water and landing at the French aerodrome at Pau, in the Pyrenees.

The first sea pictures drew exclamations of amazement from the audience, which had never seen the ocean, or indeed any body of water larger than the great salt lake at Koko Nor. Then came the rescue at sea. The lama chattered excitedly—here was something he understood perfectly: didn't the monks of the cliff monasteries in the Derge Valley enter their buildings

with precisely the same device (a breeches buoy) over the swaying cables?

The aeroplane picture was blurred and poor. They took no interest in it, thinking of it as merely another kite flight, and a rather dull one. But when Chanti explained that there was a man in this machine an excited whisper circled the hall. The film was shown again, and this time every Tibetan had his eyes riveted on the flickering black spot which Chanti had explained was the pilot. The next day the Panchan asked the English if they wouldn't fly for him in one of their aeroplanes. He was deeply disappointed to find that there was not a single such machine in Asia.

While the Panchan Lama toured India—visiting factories, riding in the high-wheeled automobiles of that era, marvelling at the equipment of the Calcutta hotels, taking brief harbour voyages in merchant vessels and warships, his "opposite number," the Dalai, was deep in the intriguing details of building a future army to make secure the temporal power he hoped to regain with British aid. Occasionally, when opportunity offered, he consulted the Panchan Lama regarding his plans for the future of Tibet. The latter was mildly interested, but had no desire to participate personally in political and military matters regarding which he felt himself uninformed. However, he had grown to have a certain confidence in the British, and plainly showed that he felt the Dalai Lama would not go far wrong in following the advice of the competent British counsellors who were always at his disposal.

Preparations for the Dalai's return, undertaken gradually over a period of thirty months under British supervision, included the purchase of arms and ammunition, the training of a group of young Tibetans in British and Indian institutions, the gathering of material for re-equipping the Lhasa arsenal and for improving the old Younghusband telegraph line, and finally the selection of British advisers who would accompany him back to Lhasa when the time came.

The Chinese army of occupation in Tibet began to disintegrate. It had never been much better than a rabble. Fed on first successes and ample opportunity for loot, it had somehow clung together long enough to reach Lhasa. Then discipline grew lax, and presently ceased to exist. The

soldiers broke away from their officers and organized themselves into little bandit bands which preyed on the countryside, led farther and farther afield by the lure of easily acquired treasure. Two Tibetan winters wrote finis to these bands of Chinese wolves, and the watching British knew that the time would shortly come when the Tibetan ruler could return to his capital with practically no fear of armed opposition.

The skeleton military machine which they had blue-printed for the Dalai Lama was now ready. But it lacked a head. There were competent young Tibetans for the staff positions and subordinate commands, but Britain felt that an older head should occupy the responsible position at the top.

"You need a minister of war," they told the Dalai Lama.

"But I, myself, am the minister of war," he replied, puzzled. He could not see himself delegating the very authority by which the whole fabric of his power must be supported. The servant would be stronger than the master, and how long would it be before the positions would be reversed?

With patience and tact the British explained lengthily the importance of having such an official, who could attend to the multifarious details and represent the Might of the government which would be set up. They emphasized that, of course, the person selected for this post must be loyal. Above all else, his loyalty to his sovereign must be unquestionable.

The Dalai Lama looked around his entourage. Whom, of them all, could he really trust? Was there a single one who would not place self-interest above all other considerations?

At the doorway of his council chamber stood Lung Shar, a narrow-shouldered but exceptionally tall Tibetan mountaineer, who had been a body servant to the Lama since his flight from Lhasa. Before that he had been merely an unidentified menial in the large retinue of domestics at the Potala.

Lung Shar could neither read nor write. His only distinction at Lhasa had been a certain expertness at killing sheep for the palace kitchen. This he did in the Tibetan manner, throwing his victim by grabbing the off legs and pulling them quickly toward him, then kneeling on its body and clamping its mouth and nostrils skilfully in a vicelike grip until the struggling animal choked to death. Lung Shar never made a false move, never a slip. He had been known to kill eighty sheep in a day.

On the way from Lhassa he had participated in a rear-guard action in the outskirts of the capital, protecting his master's flight toward India. He had ambushed a search party of six Chinese soldiers, loaded with loot from the houses they were visiting. Catching them in the lower floor of a two-storied shop, at a moment when they had thrown their arms carelessly into a corner, he and a couple of companions had shot them down without warning, through the unshuttered windows. Three of the Chinese soldiers had been killed instantly, the others, badly wounded, dropped to the floor of the shop and begged for mercy. Lung Shar climbed through the window and beat their heads in with the heavy stock of his gun. His exploit had been loudly acclaimed and had won for him his present post as doorman of the council chamber.

At the moment of the Dalai's dilemma in finding a suitable choice for minister of war, his eye fell on Lung Shar. Instantly his mind reached a decision. Here was the man! One who would not know too much, would not be too ambitious, would not seek to take his master's place.

Appraisingly, the Dalai looked Lung Shar over. Not a bad figure, if he were dressed for it. Tall enough to command, brave enough to fight, cruel enough to kill.

"I will give you my decision to-morrow," he said to the British, with a disarming smile.

When the conference was resumed the next day, Lung Shar was seated at the council table, in a new vest of yellow brocade heavy with gold threads, over a long silk gown of dark red. Inwardly a little befuddled, he spoke not a single word as he received the bows and felicitations of the British soldiers and diplomats. It was the first time he had ever worn silk, the first time that anyone had made obeisance to him. But his silence was statesmanlike and won him the instant respect of his visitors: it was in the best manner of the Orient.

Thus came into power a man whose name will never be forgotten in Tibetan history. He proved himself the cruellest and bloodiest cabinet minister who had ever held office in a country where cruelty and bloodshed have often been the hallmark of power. But the Dalai's reasons for selecting him were justified: his loyalty was never questioned. For more than twenty years, until the Dalai's death brought on Lung Shar a death more cruel than any he had ever inflicted, he

served his master faithfully, single-mindedly, without a tremor or a scruple.

The only detail of his initial appointment which needs to be added is the reason for the Dalai's delay of one day in notifying the British of his choice. The postponement was deliberate, in order that the Tibetan ruler might consult the Panchan Lama. This he did, with the most scrupulous politeness, on the afternoon of the first conference.

The Panchan had been occupied that day with a new gramophone which had been sent him as a gift from England. The marvel of the machine's ability to record a human voice, instrumental music and any other sounds interested him enormously. He visualized the delight that such an instrument, multiplied a million times, might give to his people, and particularly to the lonely monks in the remote mountain passes.

His mind turned with a certain reluctance to this new matter which the Dalai brought before him. But he listened patiently, while his guest explained the need for a minister of war, and the requirements of the office. The Dalai added that he had found a man who, he thought, would do.

"Is he of the priesthood?" the Panchan asked. The name of Lung Shar, of course, meant nothing to him.

Receiving a negative reply, he nodded approvingly. "That is well," he said. "A good priest makes a poor warrior."

Having thus satisfied himself that the appointee did not come under his jurisdiction, the spiritual head of Tibet dismissed the matter from his mind, giving blanket approval to whatever the Dalai chose to do.

It was merely another illustration of the Panchan's amiably acquiescent attitude toward matters which he felt were not in his sphere. To Chanti, who thought strongly that the Dalai Lama was dangerous and should be curbed by the man who had given Tibet five years of peace, this was a great weakness.

If Chanti had been present at the discussion of the appointment of Lung Shar, he would probably have shaken his head and wondered whether some day the Panchan Lama and Tibet might not have to pay a heavy price for the pontiff's well-meant concurrence.

PART TWO

CHAPTER ONE

MONKISH BUCCANEERS

See the student study ! See
Upon his physiognomy
The luminescent shafts of thought
That are the label of The Taught.

Let them think that this is Life :
Too soon they'll have to face The Strife,
Too soon their books they'll want to burn
In their grim struggle to unlearn.

—*Kamchatkan Inscription*

WHILE the Grand Lamas were busy with their preparations for a return to Lhasa, the time came for me to leave India for my higher education in America. My father died about this time, and my mother was offered a post as matron of girls at the Allahabad College which was Chanti's alma mater.

It was decided that I should go to Wooster College, a small Ohio institution which, under a specific endowment, specialized in the training of American youth from Asiatic countries and had at this time more than fifty such students, living together in two old-fashioned homelike dormitories. The boys were in "Livingstone Home," the girls in "Westminster Home," both near the college campus.

Nowhere else in America could such a strangely assorted group be found. Not a single one of the fifty had less than two languages; some of them spoke a half-dozen strange tongues and dialects. All of them had lived in far-off lands where strange adventures were commonplace. I was immediately thrown into fast-growing friendships with youths from China, Korea, Persia, Japan, Syria, Siam, Indo-China and Manchuria. My Asiatic background, hitherto confined almost entirely to Northern India and Tibet, began to fill in with a detailed picture of the peoples and problems of all other parts of that vast continent.

For five years at Wooster College I met this group constantly, at meals, study and recreation. The Asiatic flavour of our everyday conversation was maintained by a thousand ties and circumstances. We all had parents or relatives in Asia, and the daily mail at Livingstone consisted largely of letters with foreign stamps and postmark, supplemented by superscriptions in Arabic, Hindi and Chinese hieroglyphics. The letters brought news to be exchanged and discussed: somebody's father had shot a tiger, somebody's brother had been marooned by a flood, there was an epidemic of bubonic in somebody's home city or famine in another, there was war in Kansu or insurrection in Laos.

We had our individual loyalties, strenuously maintained, to the countries from which we came. I insisted that the Indian method of eating with the fingers was far superior to the Chinese use of chopsticks. I stuck up for the Indian sport of fighting partridges as against the Siamese duels between paradise fish or the cricket fights of Kwangtung. The magic shows of the Indian jugglers seemed to me better theatre than the acrobatics of the Chinese strolling players or the long-winded singsong of the Arabian professional storytellers. I defended the art of India—the squirrel-brush paintings on ivory as against the conventionalized Chinese line drawings on silk and the half-Europeanized art of Japan.

We compared the position of Indian women behind their purdahs with the peculiar independence of their sisters in China and the unveiled subjugation of the well-mannered Japanese. We discussed the politics of Asia, endlessly: the rape of Korea, the bedlam of China, the supremacy of the bandits in Manchuria, the thwarting of Russia, the future of Mongolia, the rise of Japan; and into all these discussions I staunchly thrust my unwavering belief in the benevolent imperialism of Britain and the inevitable importance of Tibet in the Asiatic picture.

We exchanged information on the various religions of our countries; I was the acknowledged authority on Lamaism, and had an opportunity to compare it in detail with the doctrines of Confucius, with pure Buddhism as known in China and Japan, with the animism of Tao, the modified Hinduism of Siam, the Moslem faith of Arabia and many other creeds, from the ancient fire worship of Persia to the demonology of the hairy white Ainu of Northern Japan.

When we got into a really intense discussion of such matters, the English language frequently proved inadequate. There were many untranslatable words, and we naturally fell back on colloquialisms in a dozen tongues. Without conscious effort I came to have a smattering of Arabic, Chinese and Japanese, together with an auxiliary vocabulary of words and phrases from Siamese, Korean and Russian.

My room-mate at Wooster was Harold N. Eltrich, a dapper chap from Chefoo, whose brilliant football career was cut short by a scrimmage in which he suffered a broken neck that invalidated him for two years. He belonged to a group of fifteen boys from China, whose common background held them closely together. After two years of association with them, I knew China almost as well as if I had lived there, and I understood enough Chinese to follow their conversation, which was always richly interlarded with native words.

Our evenings, in the downstairs drawing-room, were filled with tales of travel and adventure. As I look back over that period, it seems to me to bear a notable resemblance to the "Thousand and One Nights" of Harun-al-Rashid. I contributed many tales of Tibet, drawn from the endless border stories that I remembered from my talks with Chanti, Jowar, Wu Ming-fu and others. My Wooster comrades had story reservoirs no less rich than mine.

Zenos Miller, notable for his flaring red hair and baritone voice, had escaped from Boxer killers by climbing over a fourteen-foot mud wall with his family, and had been four months in reaching safety.

Bill Eddy, now a Princeton professor, had lived through so many Armenian massacres in Asia Minor that he was always getting them mixed up and spoke almost casually of mass deportation, starvation and slaughter.

Paul Wright, our silver-voiced tenor, came from Persia and had lived through the siege of Tabriz; his stories were a strange combination of old and new—modern gunfire pitted against Oriental treason, deceit and double-dealing; famine in the midst of plenty; Eastern indifference to pestilence and suffering.

Jan Baird, a fiery blond giant who disproved all traditions of the phlegmatic character of Scandinavians, came from Korea and was steeped in a naïve and childlike legendary which

PRAYERS AT A WAYSIDE SHRINE

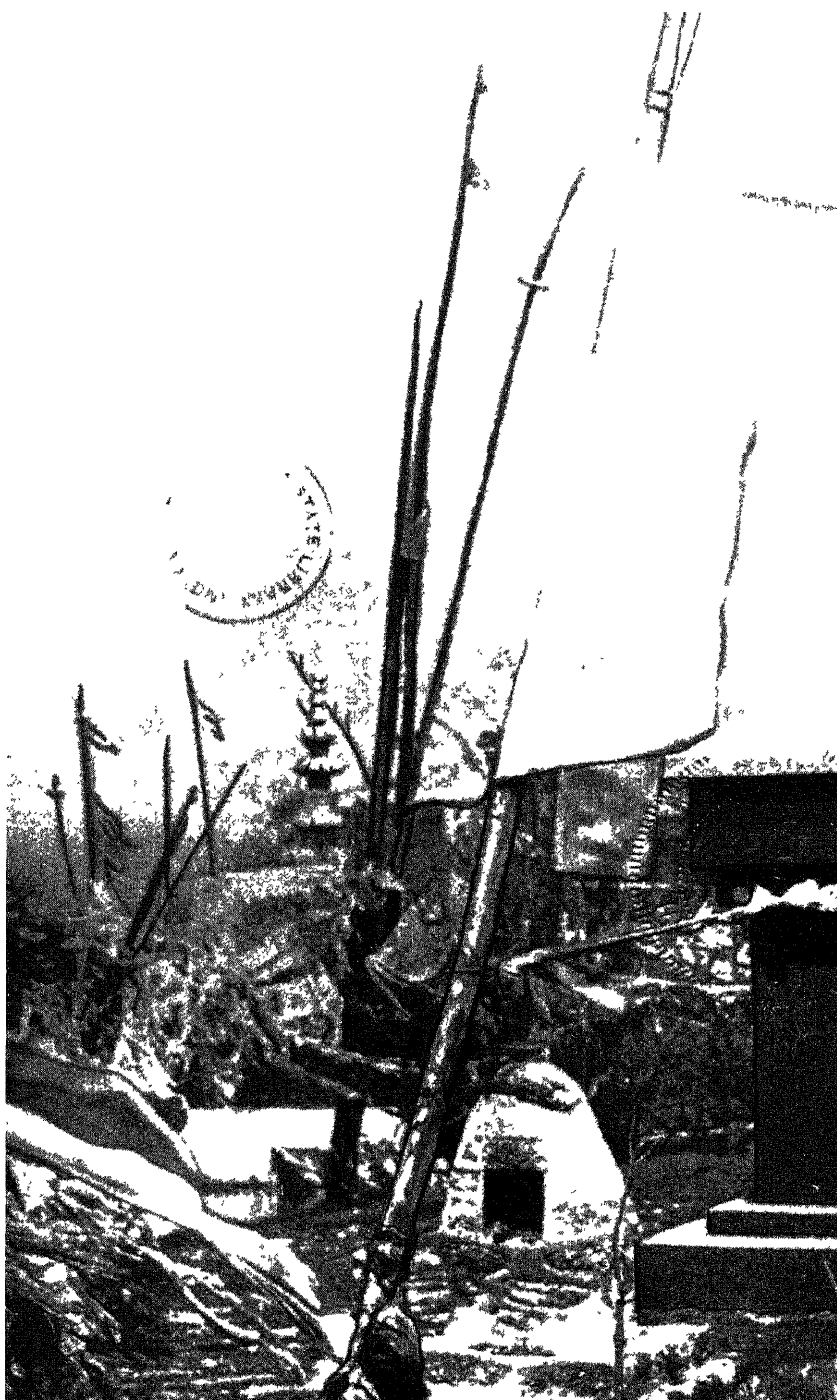
(Illustration facing page 128)

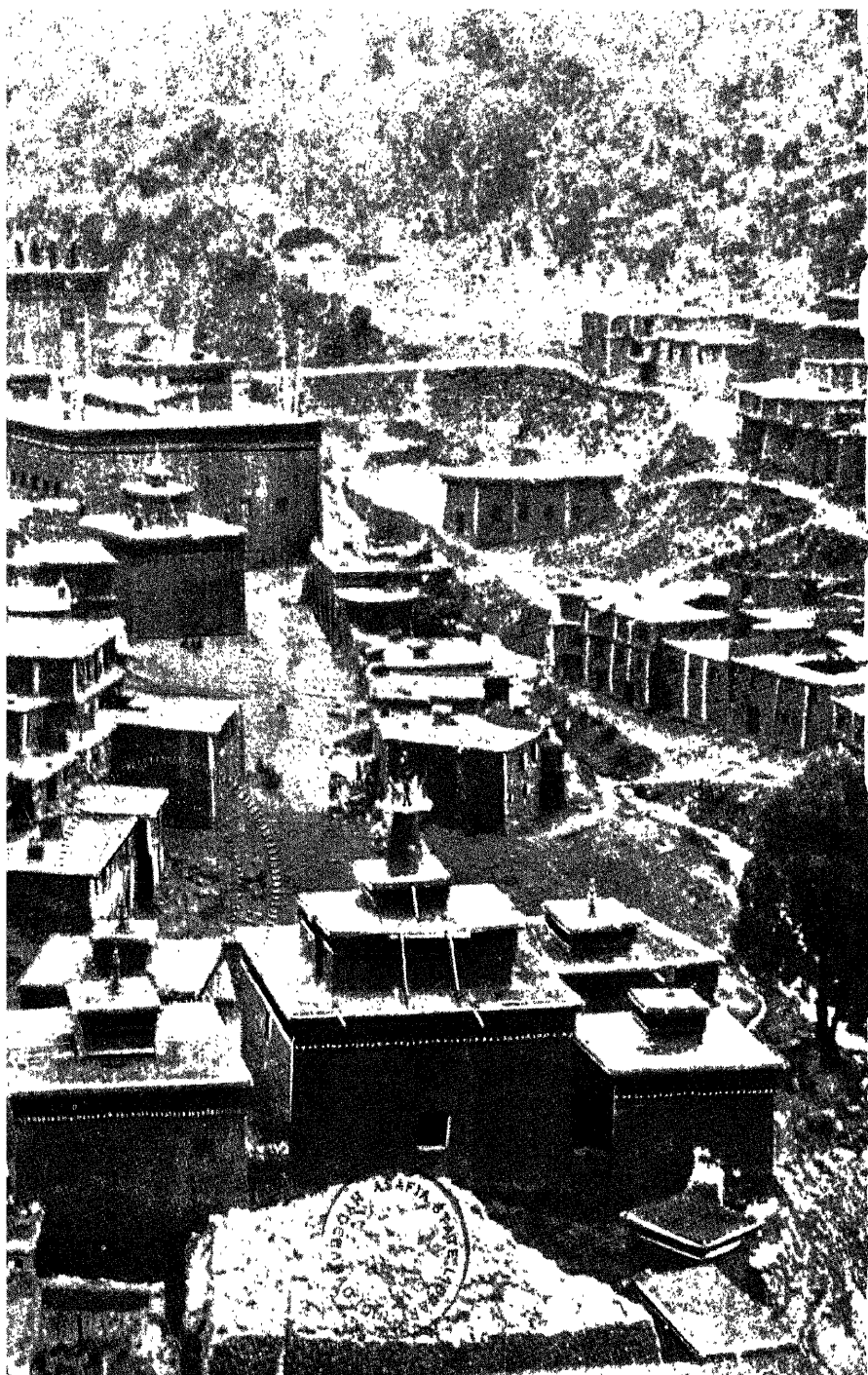
Not far from the Indian border at Almorah is found this wayside shrine, where every passing traveller stops to leave a memento of his gratitude to the local demons for letting him pass safely. The photograph shows the shrine shortly after the passage of a pilgrimage of 2000 Nepalese Lamaists on their way to visit the Panchan Lama at his capital in Tashilhunpo. All around the shrine they have left their rag prayers fluttering in the breeze, coloured pennants inscribed in Sanskrit-like characters. . . . The beehive structure near the foot of the shrine is for the burning of incense. Behind, in the background, is seen the spire of a dagoba, marking the tomb of the saint whose memory is honoured in the shrine.

WHERE LAMAIST SCRIPTURES ARE PRINTED

(Illustration facing page 129)

Notable among all the monasteries in Eastern Tibet is Derge-gompa, which is the world centre for the printing of the Lamaist scriptures. More than 3000 monks are engaged in this work. In the large building in the foreground are stored the hundreds of thousands of wooden blocks, engraved in Sanskrit-like characters, from which are printed endless copies of the 108 books of Kanjur and the 204 books of Tanjur. The former constitute the "scriptures" proper; the latter are commentaries on the text. A set of Kanjur and Tanjur costs about \$1500 and takes sixteen pack-mules to carry. . . . The monastery is located in the famous Derge Valley, containing the most beautiful Alpine scenery in all Tibet. The story of the monkish buccaneers and their unhappy adventure in the coracles on the Denchu River takes place in this district, fifty miles north-east of the great Derge Monastery.





has no counterpart anywhere else in Asia. He had watched the turbulent Japanese occupation of the peninsula, and was almost a maniac in his hatred of the invader.

My tales of the perils of mountain climbing in the Himalayas had their equal in Alan Chalfant's adventures on the flood-lashed plains of Shantung, or Sarah Campbell's encounters with wild animals in the jungles of Siam, or Edwin Wright's wanderings among the treacherous Kurds in the foothills of Mount Ararat.

Alan Chalfant's best story, as I remember it, had to do with a mass drowning of Chinese peasants along the Yellow River. The roadways of Shantung are narrow alleys between the fields of kaffir corn, rape and millet, carved out by three thousand years of use. Land is so precious that only single-track roads are permitted. Each year the flooding Yellow River adds a layer of silt to the fields. As the fields rise a few inches annually, the overworked roadway sinks by an equal amount, until the roads become chasms, usually ten or twelve feet deep, but often sinking for short stretches to depths of 60 to 150 feet. The passing of country carts in the deep "guts" is impossible, and the drivers must make sure, by shouting, that the road is clear before they enter.

It was in one of these dark canyons that a whole village of peasants, fleeing before the autumn flood, became entangled with a similar group of fugitives, bound in the other direction. Each party had its own idea of where safety lay, and their ideas were exactly opposite. In their rush, they ignored the usual courtesies of the road, and met at the bottom of the gut, 150 feet below the fields.

The welter of men, women and children, animals, carts and baggage quickly became a bedlam. Neither side would give way. They fought and argued and stormed for a whole morning, until at noon peasants from the top warned them that the waters were coming. The warning served only to make the entanglement worse, and presently the flood came, quietly and inexorably putting an end to their futile argument.

Sarah Campbell, the most popular girl in Westminster Home, knew Siam and Laos and the Shan States better than any foreigner I have ever met. I was particularly interested in the Shan States, which lie between China and Nepal,

because they form the southern flank of the Lamaist empire and have a connection with Tibet that is both ancient and intimate.

Strangest of all the peoples of Asia are the head-hunters of Shan, a race neither Chinese, Indian nor Tibetan, but the relic of some aboriginal race older than any of the others. Nominally Lamaist in religion, they have lived apart for so many centuries that their worship is hopelessly entangled with demon worship and head-hunting rites.

The principal exports of the head-hunters are jade and dragon bones. The latter are of prime importance in China and Tibet, where powdered dragon bones are used as medicine and also valued as a powerful aphrodisiac and love potion. The dragon bones are "mined" from fossil deposits in the steaming valleys which were once the abode of dinosaurs and other prehistoric monsters. The occupation is not a pleasant one, for the miners may dig in bog and swamp for months without encountering a single bone. There is danger, too, not only from fever, snakes and wild animals, but also from the treacherous quicksand. It is said by traders that every *picul* of powdered bone has cost a human life.

Here, too, is the country of the white elephants, revered as gods by the Siamese. These unimpressive animals are actually albinos, which are born at rare intervals among the herds wandering in the foothills of the Shan country. Rumours of the birth of such a prodigy trickle down from the tribesmen to Bangkok, where the royal household immediately sends out officers to investigate.

I tried to match Sarah's stories of these strange lands with my own tales of Tibet. Dragon bones, in powdered form, were no news to me. Wu Ming-fu, the Chinese trader, regularly carried neatly wrapped brown-paper packages of the mysterious medicine as part of his trade goods. Chanti, who scoffed openly at the dragon bones as mere superstition, had told me many a yarn of their use by the Tibetans as a cure not merely for bodily illness, but also for sorrow, anger and disappointment.

The "matching" of stories around the fireplace in Livingstone Home showed me that Tibet was only a small part of the world and that I had known only a small part of Tibet.

My contact with Tibet had been from the southern and perhaps least important side. I had seen it through the eyes of Chanti, Jowar and the British; now I was seeing it still more clearly from the side of the Shan States and China. China began to loom large in my picture of Tibet.

Between India and Tibet there were natural barriers that kept them far apart. Between China and Tibet there was no such mountain wall of inaccessibility.

Geographically the whole plateau of Tibet slopes toward China; all the great rivers of China have their sources in the Tibetan uplands, and the Yangtze Kiang (River of the Golden Sands) is so named because of the gold dust it washes down from the rich gold fields of the Tibetan Koko Nor. China's disastrous floods are all blamable on the crystalline loess which washes down from the plateaux of the lama land and which has the peculiar quality of gradually building up the bottoms of the rivers until they are above the level of the surrounding terrain.

The Hwang Ho (Yellow River) and the Yellow Sea are so called from their characteristic colour of Tibetan soil which they carry in solution. The mud delta of the Yangtze, on which Shanghai is built, is Tibetan loess, water-borne from a source 2000 miles and more away. China's food is largely dependent on the fertility of Tibetan soil, brought down by the two great rivers.

I took a good deal of pride in this geographical dependence of China on Tibet, and repeatedly pointed out to my comrades from the Celestial Empire that China would be no better than the Gobi Desert without the Tibetan soil and snows, which continually renew its over cultivated fields.

The "border incidents" which had occurred at Almorah between Tibetans and British were mere child's play compared with what my comrades told me about the frontier between China and Tibet. For a thousand years the province of Szechwan had suffered from the depredations of Tibetan raiders, and farther north the extension of the great Wall of China for 400 miles to Süchowfu had been built to protect Kansu province from the lama khans.

Tibetan raiders were still the chief worries of the Chinese western frontier, and frequently during my Wooster days I ran into stories of the ruthless and savage reputation which the Tibetans enjoyed in Szechwan. Most of the stories, being

Chinese in origin, told of clever devices by which the Chinese had outwitted Tibetan antagonists.

Han Wan-ling, for instance, was a tea merchant of Tachienlu, who had a long-standing feud with the Tibetan monks of a lamasery near Yilung, on a tributary of the Denchu River.

Every time Han Wan-ling went this way, with his caravan of yaks laden with brick tea, the monks forced him to pay a heavy tribute which substantially reduced his trading profits.

Finally the trader resorted to stratagem against the priestly buccaneers, and was twice successful in getting his animals past the monastery in the night. This device was successful mainly because the monastery and the caravan trail were on opposite sides of the river, and the monks had never made any effort to keep a lookout at night.

Han Wan-ling might have continued indefinitely with these tactics if he had not been so rash as to boast in the Yilung inn of his triumph over the monks. His boast came to the ears of the lamas, who delegated some of the younger brethren forthwith to watch the road at night from the roof of the monastery for the next visit of the Tachienlu trader.

It was a month or so later that he was sighted, threading his way stealthily among the white rocks of the winding trail, with six laden yaks in his convoy under the care of three helpers.

The monks had determined to teach Han Wan-ling a thorough-going lesson this time. Not just a levy of tribute, but the confiscation of his entire cargo was their purpose.

They let him proceed on his way without showing any signs that they had seen him. Unknown to him, a young monk followed him on the opposite bank, until he camped for the night, unloading his animals and piling their burden of brick tea in the shelter of a great rock.

The young monk returned to the monastery and guided a group of twelve priests, known for their ability as fighters, to a spot well upstream from the trader's camp. On their heads they carried the four yak-skin coracles which would serve them to cross the broad stream and return with their loot.

The Tibetan coracles are round, tublike boats of leather, stretched taut over a light framework of bamboo. They have neither keels nor leeboards and are steered by a single sweep

or oar. For propulsion they depend on the current of the stream, and are therefore useless for travel upstream. Mainly they are used as ferries, for back-and-forth travel from bank to bank, being light enough to be carried on a man's head to a launching point sufficiently far upstream to insure landing at the desired spot.

A Tibetan monk is not fond of water. Its use for bathing or swimming is unknown to him. He is never at home in a coracle and has little skill at even the most elementary navigation.

For the twelve monks of this nocturnal enterprise, the midnight crossing of the river was a pretty perilous adventure, which they would never have undertaken except for their determination to outwit Han Wan-ling.

They tried hard to be silent in their crossing, but the guiding of a yak-skin coracle is bound to be noisy when each occupant is issuing orders to the helmsman.

So, on their arrival on the other side, they found their enemy aware that something unusual was going on. The trader, however, had no idea that the boats contained his old foes from the monastery, whom he thought he had safely passed several miles back. When he realized who the visitors were, it was too late to do anything about it. A few threatening words and gestures sent him and his men into a panicky flight.

In fact, Han's drivers were so terrified that they put a day's march between themselves and the monks before they stopped.

Han, however, had no intention of so easily yielding to the enemy. Once he had found shelter in the darkness, he doubled back, along the water's edge, until he reached the beached coracles. The monks were by now busily engaged in unpacking the bales of tea and dividing them into three or four equal piles preparatory to the all-night job of transporting their loot, in several trips across the river, to the monastery side of the stream.

The monks had carelessly omitted to leave a guard over their boats. Han saw his opportunity. He could easily put his foot through the skin bottom of each of the coracles.

But this would only delay his enemy. A subtler plan came into his mind. If he could find a way of causing the boats to spring a leak in midstream, he would lose only about a quarter of his goods and be rid of the monks.

Out came his knife. Working swiftly but carefully, he felt for the centre of the bottom of each boat, where the bamboo ribs crossed. At this point he cut a small slit which would be protected for a short time by the wooden reinforcement above it, but which he hoped would open quickly as soon as the loaded boat got into the current.

Having done this to each of the four coracles, he slipped back behind a rock to await the outcome of his cunning.

Presently the monks, with many grunts and oaths, came down the steep rocky bank with their unaccustomed burdens. Han counted their number as they launched the boats and marvelled that they had not left one or two of their number to watch the rest of their booty until they returned.

All the boats pushed off together. In order that they might not get separated in the crossing, each monk who was not handling the sweeps stood upright, and linked arms with one of his brethren in a neighbouring coracle. The four boats moved off as a single unit, rim to rim, the monks chattering exultantly.

Han's work seemed to have been a failure, for the coracles reached midstream in safety. His slits had apparently been too small to admit a serious amount of water. He was about to acknowledge defeat when one of the monks, too enthusiastic, brought a heavy foot down on the central ribs of his coracle. Its effect far exceeded Han's wildest hopes. A gush of water swirled around the feet of the three monks in this boat, and their companions in the other coracles felt the grips on their arms tighten suddenly. The three monks in the sinking boat instinctively leaped into the adjoining coracles as their own craft settled sickeningly into the water.

The tragedy which followed was too swift to be exactly appraised by the watching trader. Whether the bottoms of the other boats gave way, or whether the quick shifting of their loads swamped them, was not quite clear. In no time at all, the twelve monkish thieves were struggling in the black water, which silently and inexorably swallowed them.

All along the Sino-Tibetan frontier, the relations between the two races were of a kind typified by the story of Han Wan-ling. At Wooster, the most abused book on the drawing-room library shelves was a big red atlas, in which we had marked the border between Tibet and China with red chalk.

Whenever a story was told of friction somewhere on this 1200 mile line, or whenever letters would come, reporting news of events or uprisings, we would get out the dog-eared map and make a penciled record of the spot. The border is so long that there never was a time when trouble was not brewing somewhere.

Tibet had no monopoly on the evening conversations. The maps of Persia, Japan and Korea were in equal demand, but I refused to be talked down. Maybe such-and-such a country was more important than Tibet, but my voice was as strong as the next man's, and I often won my point by sheer lung power.

When the crowd around the fireplace was large, it would sometimes break up into several groups, each earnestly discussing a different country. Four or five stories might be running concurrently, and frequently the stories would get all mixed up, and in the end we all sounded like so much static.

On one occasion the group opposite me was heatedly discussing the affairs of the Empress Dowager of China, who was colloquially known as "the Old Buddha" because of her fantastic ambition to be considered a female incarnation. I had my own audience, to whom I was holding forth on the Panchan Lama and his predecessors. The wires got crossed suddenly, and I found myself arguing furiously with one of the opposite group as to the authenticity of the traditional incarnations. Half of my listeners thought I was defending the Empress Dowager's absurd claims. It was several minutes before one of my opponents spoiled the lively argument by asking: "So you think she's the real thing because she can sit cross-legged with her arms across her stomach?" It was the feminine pronoun that stopped me in full flight, and the argument ended in loud guffaws.

Geographical brain teasers were a favourite pastime. Someone would ask, with a pretence of innocence, "Which is farther south, Venice or Vladivostok?" and a chorus of wrong answers would ensue before recourse to the atlas proved that the Siberian city was the southernmost. Another catch question, to be tried on newcomers, was: "Which is farther east, Shanghai or Harbin?" The usual answer, Shanghai, is wrong.

Many a thin dime changed hands in bets on distances

between obscure cities in Asia, on the current political allegiance of small states, on the names of rulers and princelings.

It never occurred to us that there was anything unusual about our group or our conversation. Yet, for much of the time, we were as far removed from the ordinary atmosphere of the surrounding Ohio farm country as if we had been actually transplanted to Asia.

CHAPTER TWO

MILLIONAIRE BANDIT OF MUKDEN

Though your smooth duplicity
Is a wondrous thing to see,
One fine day—and am I right?—
You'll be loser in a fight.

"Yes," you'd answer, I am sure,
If your head were still secure
On your neck, instead of in
Yon becrimsoned headsman's bin.

—*The Righteous Bonze of Shira-ito*

IT is difficult to set down in any orderly fashion the many varied and complex currents of information by which my knowledge of Tibet expanded and enlarged during those busy years at Wooster. From Chanti's letters I learned that the Grand Lamas had returned to their palaces in Lhasa and Tashilhunpo, that the monk Dorjief was in Urga furthering Russian schemes for separating Mongolia and Tibet from China, that nothing had come of the British plans for opening the Gartok gold fields.

India's interest in Tibet had been sharply curbed by Downing Street, which had disowned Younghusband's plans and dismissed their author. British policy had abandoned Tibet to the tender mercies of China and Russia.

At Lhasa there were unexpected difficulties arising out of the return of students who had been given a smattering of Western education in India and England and who were now trouble-makers, organizing a sophomoric "Young Tibetan" party to preach aggression and the overthrow of the old order.

There was a growing coolness between the Grand Lamas. The Dalai, at Lhasa, was increasingly under the influence of the brutal Lung Shar, now commanding a small but efficient army and eager to use it in the cause of his master. Lung Shar adroitly bent the new Young Tibetan party to his own purposes, and the heads of conservative dissenters were lopped off

ruthlessly. The Panchan Lama, sitting beneath the coloured awnings of his white palace in Tashilhunpo, saw no good in Lung Shar's plans, and his quiet opposition—although it amounted to no more than a withholding of praise—irked the Oriental potentate at Lhasa.

Events along the Tibetan border had their effect on the Hermit Kingdom. Disorder spread in China, and revolution split the ancient empire into antagonistic factions. The death of the old Empress Dowager left the dynasty in the hands of weak regents, who proved easy victims to the republican aims of Dr. Sun Yatsen and his group of Western-minded Chinese students and freethinkers. A republic was proclaimed, but both Peking and Hankow elected presidents. The large mass of Chinese people had no idea what it was all about. Provincial governors, with an eye to personal power, announced their independence and seized whatever authority they could.

Bandits and war lords sprang up with such bewildering rapidity that it was impossible to distinguish between them. Fighting broke out at a dozen different points, and a period of chaos set in, streaked with intrigue, treachery and assassination.

The provinces along the Tibetan border were open and helpless to the incursions of Tibetan bandits and irregulars, whose raids were quietly encouraged by the ambitious Dalai Lama and his belligerent minister of war, Lung Shar.

There were patriots in China, but they were woefully few and inadequate. A handful of them gathered around Yuan Shih-kai, the Peking President. He struggled to maintain the republic, but eventually became convinced that the popular desire was for a monarchy. He decided to make himself Emperor, and issued an official proclamation to that effect.

Who could have foreseen that a group of American newsreel photographers could wreck his plans and change the course of history? Yuan Shih-kai's scheme might have succeeded, and he might have created a united China under a new dynasty—except for the error of inviting the photographers to be present at his first imperial visit to the sacred Temple of Heaven. It was his way of establishing definitely in the eyes of the world that he had become Emperor of China.

Never before had foreigners been admitted to the temple during the New Year's ceremonies. He might have been

forgiven if he had merely permitted a few foreign envoys to witness his triumph. But unbelievably blasphemous, to the ordinary Chinese mind, was the terrible sin of letting this supreme rite be recorded on celluloid film for exhibition to barbarians everywhere. Royalists and republicans alike were stirred with sincere anger and resentment, and the storm of protest left the self-proclaimed Emperor no alternative but suicide. It was the only atonement he could make for his unpardonable transgression. He took a lingering poison and was dead within a month.

Meanwhile, north of Tibet, the 1500-mile breadth of Lamaist Mongolia was a vast arena of confusion, where an army of 5000 Chinese was suddenly engulfed in a wholesale massacre whose exact significance nobody knew.

Russia had gradually recovered from her defeat by Japan, but her diplomatic policy had veered from Tibet and was concentrated on strengthening her Asiatic frontiers in Mongolia and north of Manchuria. The Balkan War had deflected European attention from Asia and this lack of interest in Asia on the part of the Western powers undoubtedly retarded the consolidation of a new China, under the Republic.

Then one day I received a letter from Chanti, urging me to watch the movements of Japan in Asia. Of course, I was already keenly aware of the progress Japan had made in her deliberate campaign of empire building in Korea, Manchuria and Mongolia. Nobody who was interested in the international politics of Asia could fail to know of Japan's aggressions. But I had not, up to this time, taken much pains to relate the Nipponese thrusts to Tibet and the Lamaist territories surrounding it.

Chanti's letter brought sharply to my attention the obvious fact that eventually the Japanese spear would reach Mongolia and begin pointing toward the theocratic head of Lamaism. Tibet could not much longer ignore the race which Chanti had contemptuously labelled "dwarfs."

At Wooster there were three students from Japan and several more who had known the Japanese rule in Korea. Through them I began to fill in my fragmentary knowledge of the Nipponese.

One day I mentioned the stories I had heard long ago at Almorah of a mysterious Japanese spy who was reported to

have lived in Lhasa under the disguise of a Chinese doctor. The story was well known in Tokyo, I learned. This Japanese pioneer in Tibet was a professor named Kawaguchi, who had made his way to Lhasa and had remained there for three years before he was discovered and denounced. He had contrived to escape, although his native servants and retinue were thrown into prison.

The results of his work, however, had been eminently satisfactory to Tokyo. He was now a full-fledged professor at the Imperial University, teaching a group of Japanese youths the Tibetan language in preparation for future developments in Central Asia.

The Kawaguchi story indicated the careful long-range planning with which Japan was approaching every stage of her Asiatic adventures, and the enormous scope of her ultimate ambitions.

The students from Korea were full of Japanese spy stories. No nation in the history of warfare has ever devoted such intensive and wholesale attention to its "Intelligence" Department. In fact, the Japanese spy system goes far beyond anything ever conceived in Western warfare, because the ultimate aim of it is not merely the obtaining of useful information but the incitement of all sorts of internal feuds and banditry to weaken every possible future enemy.

A Japanese proverb states that "the clever general insures victory by letting his enemies fight each other." This technique, enlarged by inciting the enemies to do their fighting even before they become enemies, has been the bulwark of Japanese policy in Asia for a generation.

Even in Tibet the bubbling of Japanese machinations has been felt from time to time. Pupils of Kawaguchi have made secret pilgrimages across the Tibetan frontier. Their favourite disguise is that of Chinese doctors or pilgrims. They are Japanese Kim-men, mapping out the north country and charting its resources. But their activities are much more comprehensive than were those of the British agents. Political incitement and intrigue are an essential part of their mission. News of factional fights, border disputes or tribal quarrels are transmitted to Tokyo, and other Japanese agents, in China or Mongolia, seek to encourage any quarrelsome clashes that may serve a purpose.

Meanwhile many young Tibetan students have been invited to visit Japan, and the aim is to induce them to return as "missionaries," indirectly subsidized.

Not all Japan's agents are Japanese. There are White Russians, Koreans and Mongolians who do Japan's bidding along the Tibetan frontiers under penalty of reprisals against their families. The general aim of the whole system is to keep alive any discords that may serve to weaken a distant nation that may one day require subjugation.

Most of the Japanese spy stories, therefore, deal with this phase of the Nipponese secret service. Perhaps none of them equals the story of Major Kato, Japanese spy, and Chang Tso-lin, millionaire bandit of Mukden.

There was nobody in our group at Wooster who did not know of Chang Tso-lin's rise and power. He was a modern and highly magnified version of Robin Hood, Dick Turpin the James boys and the Dalton brothers.

Chang started his career as a cattle driver, rose until his cash balance in the Yokohama Specie Bank was \$35,000,000, and finally ended his twenty-five years of banditry in such threatening power that his Japanese masters had to execute him by blowing up his private train with a dynamite bomb.

It was the Russo-Japanese War that brought Chang his great opportunity. Up to that time he had been a local outlaw whose routine operations included highway robbery, cattle rustling and the ancient Chinese occupation of kidnapping for ransom. He had become a master in the minor arts of treachery, cunning and double-dealing, but he had never visualized any opportunity of using his talents on a really large scale.

Japan's operations against the beleaguered Russians in Port Arthur opened Chang's eyes to what a bandit genius might achieve. But his first efforts in his new field were merely those which would naturally be seized by any wily Chinese trader offering his wares to two eager customers.

The Japanese needed meat. Chang and his men controlled the country to the north of the Japanese Army, and no cattle could get through without his permission.

Japan might have sent an army to drive the bandits back, but the troops were needed at Port Arthur, and it was easier to compromise with Chang. So he was employed as chief

comprador and was paid a fancy price for all the cattle he drove through to the Japanese lines.

After Japan had won her war against Russia, Chang rose from being merely the principal contractor to the Japanese to a quasi-independent place as Manchurian "war lord." His function, in the Japanese plan, was to push their influence gradually northward, far beyond the bounds specified in the treaty. They were sure of him, because they held his money; and with this surety in their hands, they felt safe in giving him arms and ammunition wherewith to rule, under their dictation, as large an area as he could reach.

He was a natural-born reacher. His army grew apace, and his power spread until he controlled an area larger than France, with a population of 30,000,000.

Chang had no loyalty to Japan. His eye was single to his own interests, but in his soul he was a Chinese, ready, if the time came and there was a profit in it, to betray Japan to Peking.

Undoubtedly the Japanese instinctively realized this, but they relied upon their surety, in the Specie Bank, to hold him in leash.

Eventually the time came when Japan's ambitions turned to the westward steppes of Mongolia. China would be the great enemy if Japan moved into Mongolia. Therefore, the Mongols must be incited against the Chinese, and Mongolian aggression against the Chinese must be made to begin as soon as possible.

None of this could be done openly by the Japanese against a country with which they were nominally at peace. But Chang, the millionaire bandit, was an ideal tool. On his own responsibility, he could arm and foment the Mongol "banners," or leagues. Japan could make all the usual formal diplomatic protestations of innocence and still be sure that the work would go on.

Chang Tso-lin gave the plan his hearty approval, and began the job assigned to him. But meanwhile he did some important thinking, which resulted in the dispatch of certain trusted messengers to Peking. He was able to conclude negotiations which resulted very profitably to his private purse, and left the Mongol banners to use the arms he supplied them to whatever patriotic purpose might develop.

He was highly pleased with the arrangement. Being paid by both sides was a gratifying and profitable master stroke.

At the same time he was making himself a friend of China and augmenting his own military power.

Japan was not ignorant of the possibilities for double-dealing in this newest relationship with the Manchurian war lord. To check up on Chang's activities in Mongolia, they deputed one of their cleverest Intelligence officers, Major Kato, who had spent his life in mastering the Mongolian language, customs and geography.

Kato was a careful little man, who had been in Mongolia many times in various disguises, and had studied the Mongolian mode of life until he was letter perfect in their methods of eating, drinking, bargaining and even story-telling. Because the Mongol nomads are great horsemen, like the Russian Cossacks or the American cowboys, he had spent many painful years mastering their riding technique, an accomplishment as difficult for a Japanese as learning to speak Latin would be to a Tibetan gold washer.

Kato entered Mongolia on this occasion, however, not in the disguise of a nomad, but as a Chinese "agent" of Chang Tso-lin. The Japanese had bluntly ordered Chang to issue all the necessary passports and credentials for him, without particularizing very much as to the object of his mission.

Chang, however, with his mind fully conscious of his secret arrangements in Peking, saw through the Japanese scheme. He knew Kato as an agent so clever that nothing in Mongolia would escape his eye. Steps must be taken to insure his silence, and the only way to secure the silence of a patriotic Japanese is death.

So one of the passports issued to Kato, addressed to a distant Mongol chief, included a code mark, so insignificant that it escaped the scrutiny of the always-suspicious Japanese experts, which would mean to the distant chief that the bearer was not to come back.

Kato went on his way. He had been ordered to visit and study six Mongol banners, on the pretence that he was acting for Chang as an inspector of the arms and munitions distributed there. He did not gather any information which he regarded as suspicious until he reached the fifth banner, and it was only at the sixth and last place that he turned his suspicions into undeniable evidence of Chang's double-dealing.

The information he now possessed was the most important

HIGHEST TOWN IN THE WORLD

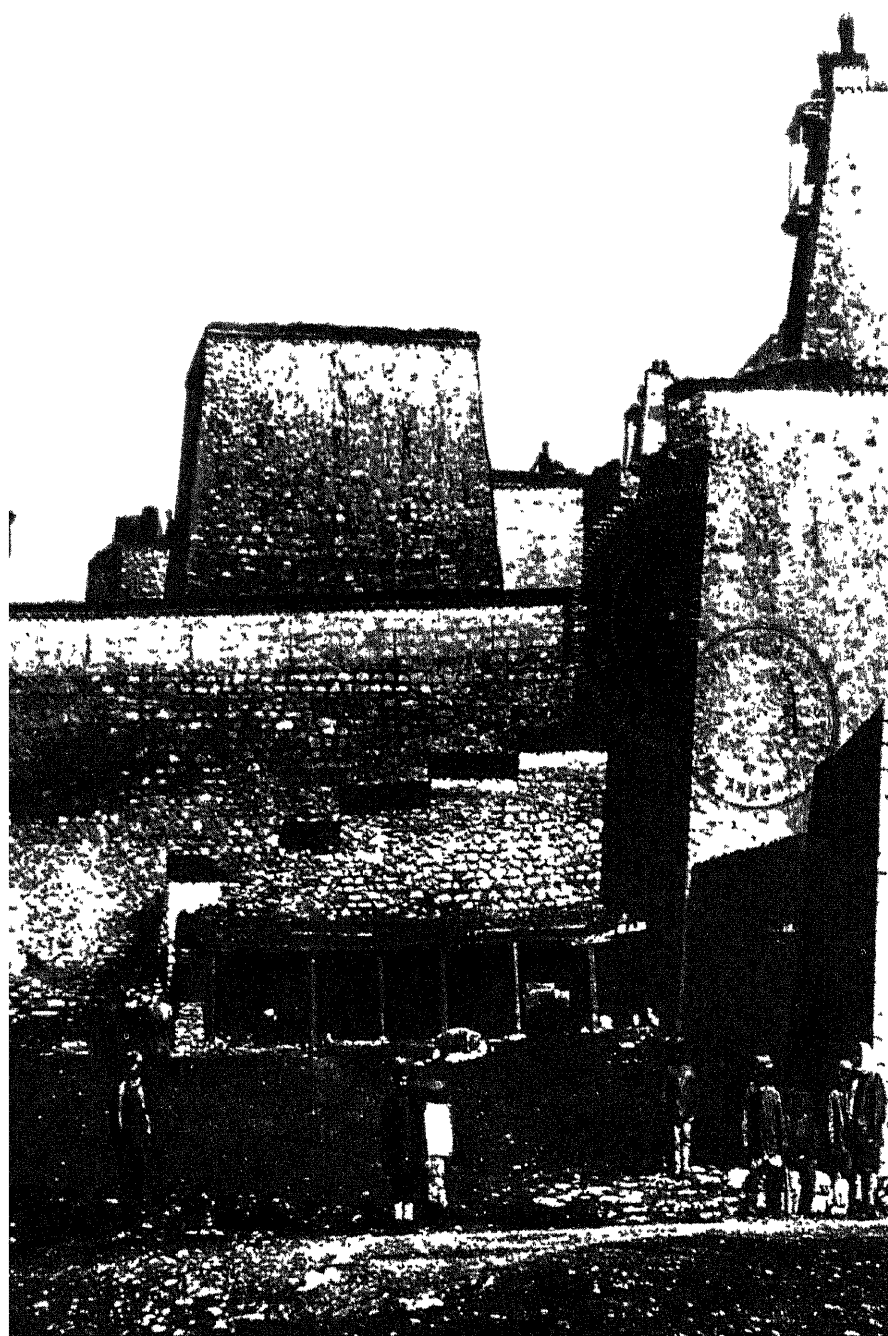
(Illustration facing page 144)

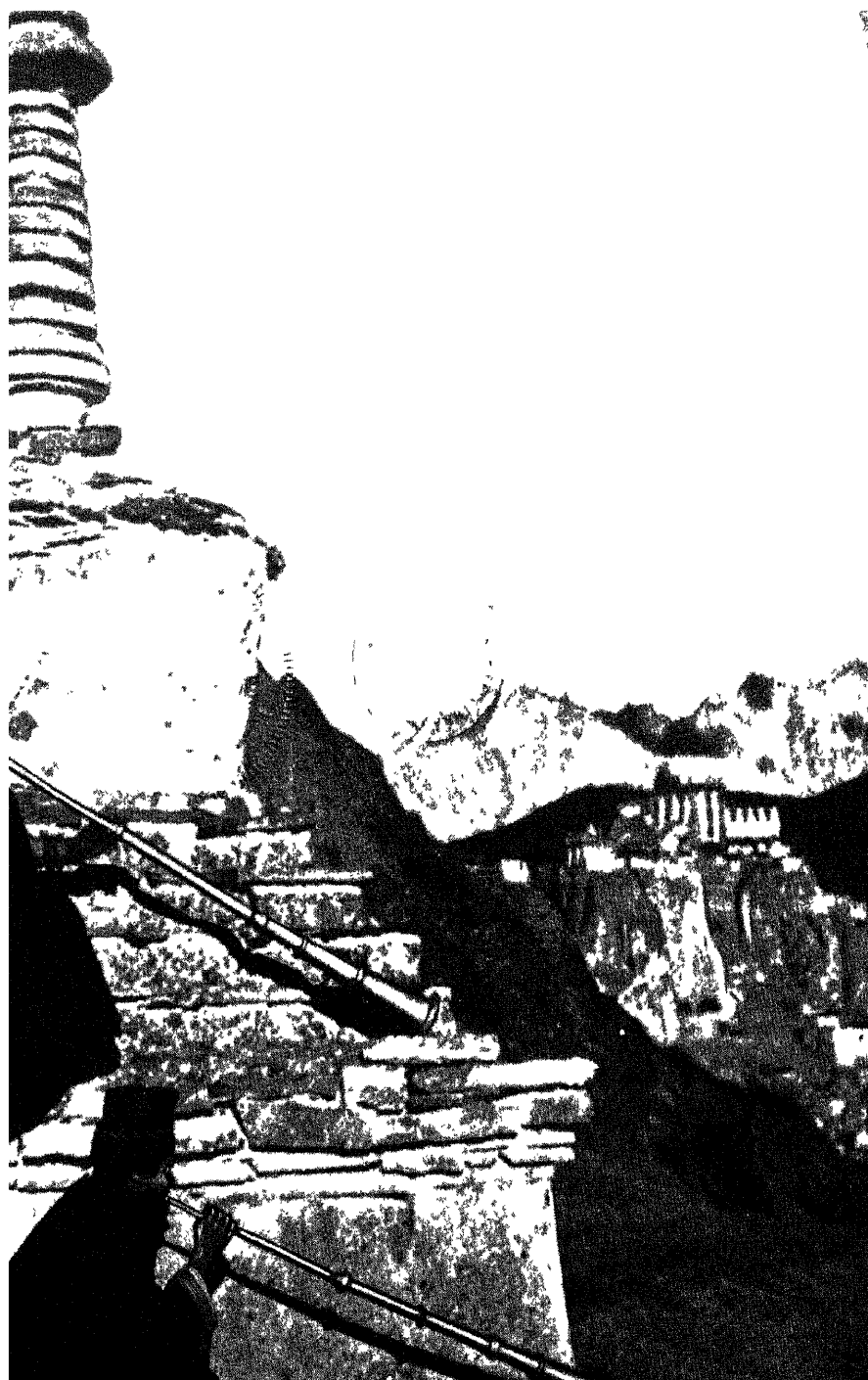
When the British army entered Phari the advance guard reported a formidable jong overlooking the town, with a large garrison of Tibetan troops, well armed and provisioned to stand an indefinite siege. But the size of the British column dismayed the defenders and they abandoned their position as the British approached. Inside the fort was found a year's supply of grain and yak butter, together with an astounding collection of ancient iron-and-bamboo armour. . . . This photograph was taken at the time of the occupation, and shows British native troops around the base of the fort and on sentry duty on the topmost tower.

ACROPOLIS MONASTERY NORTH OF ALMORAH

(Illustration facing page 145)

Early morning call to prayer at the famous Lamaguru-gompa just beyond the crest of the Himalayas. The horns are of Tibetan bronze, rich in gold. They make a moaning sound of great carrying power, which echoes and reverberates through the valley. The stout horn-blowers have taken their position on the ancient tomb of a lesser incarnation, which is in the form of a dagoba, its five sections representing the five elements of Lamaism—earth, air, fire, water and ether. . . . The buildings of the monastery are piled up along a granite hill, at whose base are clustered the huts of acolytes, attendants and serfs.





in his military career. It was imperative that he hurry back and denounce Chang Tso-lin to his superiors. The whole structure of Japanese policy in Asia would be affected by this proof of treachery.

His effort to accelerate his departure from the hospitality of the banner chief met with unexpected obstacles. Mongolian etiquette is strict, like that of Arabia, and Kato could not plausibly hurry away from the man with whom he had broken bread. But the chief's reception programme was far more lengthy and protracted than any Kato had ever encountered. After two days of delay he began to have his suspicions and these were confirmed by fragments of conversation which he overheard.

He realized quite clearly that he had been betrayed, and that his death had been ordered. He determined to make his escape that very night and laid his plans carefully, so that there could be no slip.

He learned that the Mongol "dispatch rider" would come through that evening on his weekly ride with the mailbags, bound from Hailar to Kerulen, and he plotted to take this horseman's place on the swift mount that would be supplied him.

The dispatch riders are among the most ancient and picturesque institutions of the steppes. They often ride for three days and nights at a stretch, stopping only to change mounts at the necessary intervals. The speed which they make, and the gruelling nature of their task, is such that they wear a special costume, consisting of roll upon roll of cotton bandage wrapped like a puttee around their limbs and body, over their trousers and short coats, covering them completely except for their face and hands. The purpose of this binding is to support them against the terrific pounding of the prolonged hand-gallop and to avoid muscle fatigue and chafing.

Kato laid his plans carefully. When the dispatch rider arrived, just after midnight, he stole from his host's tent while the rider was changing mounts and drinking a quick cup of buttered tea. A short distance outside the camp he waylaid the departing horseman, leaping behind him on his mount in a surprise attack, and killing him swiftly and silently with a single thrust of his long-bladed belt knife.

He disrobed the body carefully, rolling up the long bandages and laying the rider's trousers and coats over the horse's

saddle. Then he threw the naked corpse into his host's crowded sheep corral, and rode off, through the night, for four or five miles before he stopped in the light of a crescent moon to substitute the dispatch rider's clothing for his own.

It was quite a task to wind himself in the bandages, but at last it was done, and so skilfully that Kato was sure he would pass muster anywhere along the route.

Full of confidence, he resumed his flight. Given an hour's start from the chief's tent, no pursuit could catch him, for the horses given to the dispatch riders are always the swiftest in the countryside.

There are no roads in Mongolia. Kato guided himself by the stars. He knew where his next change of mounts would take place and he was sure of his course.

But after four hours of riding, he was not so sure. The stars are evasive guides when one is heading for a point as small as a wandering nomad village of tents.

Another two hours and he knew he was wrong. It was broad daylight now. He stopped his horse and dismounted, studying his pocket compass and comparing it carefully with the course he had followed. He was such a good topographer that he was able presently to reach the definite conclusion that he had veered a point or two to the southward, and must retrace his steps a few miles, pushing determinedly northward, if he was to reach the place where his remount awaited him.

It did not seem like a serious matter, however. His departure probably would not have been discovered until daybreak, and pursuit would therefore be a long way behind.

Undisturbed, he turned back. It was a matter of no more than an hour before he sighted the tented village which was his objective.

Unfortunately for Kato, his flight had been discovered in a few minutes, owing mainly to the fact that the chief's dogs had promptly scented the corpse of the murdered dispatch rider among the huddled sheep and set up such a commotion and stampede over devouring it that in no time at all the remains of the body were found and the departure of the guest discovered.

The chief was very little disturbed about the murder. One dispatch rider more or less was nothing to worry about. But the escape of Kato was another matter. He had no desire

to face Chang Tso-lin's anger, if the war lord's orders were not carried out. The fleeing guest must be overtaken and killed. That was important.

So a little band of riders set out from the chief's tent, heading for the next remount station. If Kato had already passed there, they were to continue on until they found him. If he were still there, they must kill him and bring back his belongings as evidence to be sent to Chang.

The group pressed their horses to the utmost and reached the remount station before daybreak. Nothing had been heard of Kato. They left instructions as to what was to be done to him if he arrived and pushed on to the next station.

Two hours later Kato came riding in. Nothing unusual or exceptional was evident at the station. But as he drew up his fatigued horse, he heard a sharp command from a voice of authority. In response, a group of huge dogs, fierce Mongolian mastiffs, leaped toward the arriving horseman. Too late the self-possessed Japanese realized his danger. He turned his tired mount in an effort to gallop free of his wolf-like pursuers, but it was futile. Fastening their huge fangs in the bandages of his legs, the excited dogs pulled him ferociously from his pony.

Helpless in his bandages, Kato could do little or nothing to oppose them as they chewed angrily at his legs, arms and body. The tall dark man who had set the dogs on him stood by indifferently for a few minutes, then, with deliberation, seized a heavy stick and savagely beat off the dogs. As they slinked away, Kato tried to rise. But before he could get fully to his feet, the tall man nonchalantly picked up a Japanese gun which was leaning against the tent wall and fired it unemotionally into Kato's face.

A trumped-up story of accidental death was dispatched that day to Chang, who used it thereafter as an excuse for refusing permits to other Japanese representatives who wished to go into Mongolia under his protection.

Stories like this, in endless variety, came from my fellow students at Wooster, building up a convincing picture of the persistence and energy with which the Japanese were pushing their plans in Asia.

Jan Baird told of a Russian fruit farmer in Port Arthur named Bickoff, who was forced to enter the Japanese Intelli-

gence Service by threats against his property and family. He was a retired gunnery officer in the Russian navy, who had won many decorations and citations in the service of the Tsar. The Japanese sent him to Vladivostok to secure up-to-date plans of the mines and harbour fortifications. Arriving in the Russian port, he went secretly to the Russian authorities and persuaded them to give him a set of "doctored" blue prints which would serve to befuddle the Japanese General Staff.

In due course he delivered these documents to taciturn Captain Okada, who had employed him. But Bickoff realized the danger he would be in if his duplicity were discovered, and as soon as he left Okada's office, he notified his family that he was going on a "business trip" and took the next boat for Tientsin, the Chinese seaport of Peking.

For two weeks he lived with friends in Tientsin, and had begun to feel that the danger was past. Another week and he could return home. Then suddenly his host brought him news of a dispatch printed in the *Peking-Tientsin Times*, relating that his favourite grandson, a youth of fifteen, had been arrested in Port Arthur, charged with photographing the new Japanese fortifications, and was to be taken to Japan for trial before a military tribunal.

Bickoff went in haste to the Russian consul-general in Tientsin. A phone call to the Japanese concession brought back a cryptic message indicating that it would be "advisable" for Bickoff to return to Port Arthur.

Bickoff understood. He returned to Port Arthur. The boy was promptly released and Bickoff was jailed in his stead. It was the grandfather who went to Japan to face a military court-martial. And that was the last that was ever heard of Bickoff.

Alan Chalfant, whose real mother tongue was the dialect of North China, had many Chinese variations on the theme of Japanese adroitness in espionage, most of them located in the German-fortified city of Tsingtao, midway between Shanghai and Port Arthur on the China coast. Here Germany had created a Chinese Heligoland, a stronghold designed to be the centre of a vast German sphere of influence in China, commanding the rich trade of the huge province

of Shantung. It was manned by a full army corps of Germans, including artillery and infantry, supplemented by the headquarters of the Kaiser's Asiatic fleet.

Japan looked enviously upon Tsingtao. Just as the Japanese had thrown the Russians out of Port Arthur, so they planned some day to oust the Germans from this commanding vantage point. Naturally, then, Tsingtao was an active centre of Japanese espionage, with a chain of barbers, restaurant owners, nursemaids, veterinarians and cobblers as the eyes and ears of the service.

Alan Chalfant's Chinese friends estimated that there were half a thousand Japanese spies inside the German city, some of them in the household employ of important German officials.

Germany was well aware of the Japanese efforts, and had a counter-espionage service that often made things difficult and dangerous for the Mikado's men. The hardest task was to deliver the weekly reports and information that Tokyo required, even though the German secret police were generally unimaginative and ponderous.

The Japanese developed a system which worked perfectly for nearly two years before the Germans uncovered it. Even then it probably continued to operate in some amended and improved form.

The scheme was to put the coded reports, often in invisible ink, into the linings of the baggage of foreigners travelling to Shanghai. All important foreign visitors to Tsingtao stayed at the Prinz Eitel Friedrich Hotel. On sailing days, Japanese agents in the hotel would get access to the suit-cases of departing guests and carefully conceal in them the outgoing messages. To insure delivery, many copies of the same documents would be thus planted and the baggage secretly marked for identification by the Shanghai "message centre."

Not only did American and British traders, officials and tourists thus act as the innocent transmitters of Japanese information, but even Germans gave aid and comfort to the enemy. In fact, the Japanese took a peculiar delight in using German messengers, particularly military, naval and diplomatic officers.

When Germany eventually discovered the system, the task of examining outgoing baggage became so complicated that it required a staff of scores of people, and the most innocent

papers were put through exhaustive tests and frequently confiscated for filing in the archives of the Kommandantur.

One of my fellow-students, who came from Japan, pooh-pooed all stories of Japanese international intrigue. He was an independent thinker, inclined to doubt unproved statements and to question other people's pet theories. His last name was Fulton, and the only first name that I can remember for him is our nickname of "Goat."

He punctured all stories of Japanese espionage with merciless demands for "actual proof." Whatever information service Japan had, he maintained, was no different from that used by England, Germany, France and Russia.

It was his contention that Japan's advance into Asia had been forced upon her by the intense rivalry of the other great powers in the Orient. Her policies were benevolent; her handling of the native populations was just and tolerant. The Japanese were the most kindhearted people in the world, and he challenged us to prove anything to the contrary.

"You are just yarn spinners," he would say contemptuously. "You retail a lot of back-yard gossip like poolroom loafers."

We would retort with specific charges against the Japanese. Had they not violated all basic international law by striking at Russia before making a formal declaration of war? Had they not done the same thing in Korea? What about the Russian warships sunk in a neutral harbour? And so on.

Fulton had an answer, every time. Japan was ringed round with enemies and had acted in self-defence. Most of the rules of the game were made by the Western nations, seeking their own advantage; why should Japan observe every last comma and stipulation?

The Western powers, he said, had never done anything for Asia except to rob her. If England, Germany and Russia had a right to grab off huge "spheres of influence" in Asia, why shouldn't Japan get a share?

One evening, when I was dilating on the Japanese advance toward Mongolia, I declared dramatically that this was an incursion into the Lamaist empire which actually threatened the centre of that empire, my beloved Tibet.

Fulton stopped me with a cynical question: "Well, Britain and Russia have had their whack at Tibet, haven't they? Why not give Japan a chance?"

England and Russia, he persisted, had been no help to Tibet. They had developed no resources, built no railroads, established no important trade. For them, Tibet was just a buffer between India, Siberia and China.

"Let Japan go into Tibet," he said, "and you'll see action that will benefit five million Tibetans. If there's gold in Tibet, it will come out. If there are mineral resources, they will be developed. Roads will be built, modern towns will spring up. The people will be educated and civilized. That's what is happening in Korea and South Manchuria."

But among his fellow-students he failed to make any converts to his doctrines.

CHAPTER THREE

WINGS OVER FRANCE

Man's a lusty troublemaker,
Shouts for peace but he's a faker,
Always itching for a sabre
When he contemplates his neighbour.
Peace to man was never thrilling,
Man is normal when he's killing.

—*Ballad of Koko Nor*

I HAD completed all my preparatory work for the college course and had finished my freshman year with greater distinction in athletics than in scholarship, when the World War broke out in Europe. The actual declarations of war came during the summer vacation, which I was spending at the old Chautauqua Assembly grounds, trying to earn my next year's wardrobe and textbook money. Alan Chalfant and I had secured jobs in the Chautauqua lunchroom, where he was chief dishwasher and I was second cook and errand boy.

August was a memorable month for me, not merely on account of the excitement of war, but also because it was during the early part of this month that I saw my first airplane flights, which stirred me more than anything I can remember.

One of the famous early fliers, whose name I no longer recall, had brought a Curtiss hydroplane to Lake Chautauqua from the nearby Curtiss base at Hammondsport. He rigged up a tent-hangar on the shore of the lake, not far from the restaurant. There was a roped-off enclosure around the tent, and a fee of ten cents was charged those who wished to inspect the machine. Every day for two weeks or more he made taxi-hops across the lake, carrying only one passenger at a time and collecting ten dollars for the five-minute round trip.

His flights took place during my afternoon time-off at the restaurant. I went to work at six in the morning, and had three

hours' "rest time" between two and five in the afternoon, before starting my short-order preparations for the evening meal. Our flier took the air only in the afternoon, when the wind was light and the weather clear. So I never missed his performances in the crude crate which was the last word in aviation at that time.

I had no dimes to spare for inspection of his machine, but I hung over the ropes until my persistence was rewarded by the chance to help drag the plane out of the water at the end of the afternoon's flights. So I came to know every strut and wire as intimately as I had known the bamboo framework of my Almorah kites. I knew, too, exactly how the flier manipulated his controls, and I was quite sure that with a little practice I could do it as well as he.

By the time I returned to Wooster the World War was well under way. Within a few weeks it began to touch me closely. Letters came from India, telling that several of my English friends had enlisted and were on their way to Europe as subalterns in Indian regiments. Native troops were being shipped out of India as rapidly as possible, because England feared Germany's attempts to start a holy war among the Indian Mohammedan regiments. The British policy was to scatter these armed warriors, and to police India with Australians and New Zealanders.

My mother was still the matron of the school in Allahabad, a strongly garrisoned city which was a concentration point for the departing regiments, and she wrote me about the social and welfare activities in which she was constantly participating.

Similar echoes of the war came to my fellow-students in the letters from their far-off parents and relatives. Recruiting of Chinese labour battalions started in Shantung. There were rumours of a Sikh uprising in the Malay States. The German cruiser *Emden* had been seen at Port Swettenham in the Bay of Bengal. Japan shattered all Oriental precedent by entering a European conflict, and news came to Alan Chalfant of the impending Japanese attack on the great German fortress city of Tsingtao. Paul Wright and Bill Eddy had letters from Constantinople and Beirut, describing German activity in Turkey.

The war came into our very midst a few days after college opened, when Arthur Snyder—one of our group from Lahore,

India—walked into Livingstone Home dressed in a Canadian uniform. Unknown to any of us, he had gone over to Cleveland, sixty miles away, and had visited the recruiting office opened by the Canadian Army, where he had been promptly accepted and outfitted.

His uniform was the sensation of the campus, and it stirred many of us to envy and to dreams of going and doing likewise. Arthur was the most incurably romantic soldier I ever met. On a subsequent visit to Wooster, while he was in training in Canada, he pictured army life so alluringly that there wasn't one of our group who wouldn't have swapped places with him.

The next break in our ranks, however, did not come until the Mexican border trouble started the United States enrolling a volunteer army of its own. Alan Chalfant, Zenos Miller, Steve Palmer and Jim Swallen enlisted in the Ohio National Guard, donned American khaki and went to Texas.

But to many of us this Mexican rumpus seemed a pretty piffling side issue. I argued desperately with Alan Chalfant, seeking to persuade him not to let himself be pushed into this blind alley. "If you want to be a soldier," I insisted, "why not be a real one—go to France!"

My arguments failed to persuade him, but they had an indelible effect on my own mind. From the moment that he and the others left for Texas, I was on the lookout for a way to get to France.

I found it, eventually, through enlistment in a Norton-Harjes ambulance unit. It was a year before the time for me to graduate from Wooster when I sailed from New York for the front in France.

For six months I drove a Ford ambulance in Picardy and at Verdun. But this work did not satisfy me. It was almost as much of a blind alley as the Mexican-border duty which I had ridiculed to Alan Chalfant. I was a noncombatant, not a fighter.

Again I sought for a way. Six months of service at the front earned me an eight-day leave. I went to Paris and taxied straight from the railroad station to 8 rue Pinel, where was located the bureau for enlistment in the French Foreign Legion. My mind had long been made up that I wanted to be in the

flying arm of the service, and I had no difficulty in being accepted promptly for flight training in the aviation school at Tours.

I was one of a squad of fifteen Americans that arrived at Tours one August afternoon. The high-pressure training began immediately. Our classroom work was under an American named Hamilton, who had been wounded while flying at the front and whose teaching was eminently practical—map reading, theory of flight, engine mechanics and aerial gunnery. From his charts we learned to know the silhouettes of all types of enemy planes. From his maps we learned the contours of the war zone, distances, winds and local weather lore.

Classroom work took up only a few hours daily, and was catch-as-catch-can—being called during hours when actual flying was impossible because of darkness, fog, rain or wind. Flying practice started on our second day at Tours. I was assigned to a French lieutenant named Guerlain, who had a two-seater Caudron training plane. Twenty minutes after I had met him, we were in the air, and he was permitting me to “feel out” the controls. We flew for ten minutes only; then Guerlain brought the plane to an expert landing and discussed my actions with me for a few minutes before starting up with his next pupil. I stood by and watched this flight, knowing that he was going to ask me to criticize it when it came my turn to go up again. Two or three more pupils were put through the same routine before he came back to me for my second hop.

The programme from that time on was two flights daily, lengthening in duration as my skill increased. But for ten or eleven hours each day I would sit on the field, watching every flight and discussing it with my fellow-students and our moniteurs.

After three weeks of this, I soloed. It was a simple hop, in a straight line from one side of the mammoth aerodrome to the other. Not more than two minutes altogether. And the preparation for it had been so thorough that it was practically impossible to go wrong. As I climbed out of the cockpit and walked back around the two-mile field, I kept repeating to myself “I have flown alone!”

Guerlain, as soon as I reached his side, motioned me into another machine. “Go up again, before you’re cold!” he said,

without a single word of comment on my performance. And this time, he told me, I was to circle the field.

The numbness of my first solo flight had not worn off when I was again in the air, this time completely aware of what I was doing. I circled the field, climbing faster than I should have done, with the result that I badly overshot the landing place. I three-pointed fairly well, but when I had taxied back to Guerlain, he asked me with quiet sarcasm: "Would Monsieur like me to order all the other planes off the field, so that he may have room for his *atterissage*?"

I was a little chagrined, but I realized that I had passed the test, and that the privilege of wearing wings on my uniform was now only a matter of time.

Four weeks of spirals, cross-country flights, altitude tests and elementary aerobatics followed. Bit by bit I made up my totalisation of thirty solo hours and fifty solo landings.

Then I got my wings, and moved on to Issoudun for the postgraduate work of aerial gunnery, advanced aerobatics and formation flying.

The first units of the American army were now in France, but no American squadrons had yet arrived. The fields at Tours and Issoudun were taken over by the A.E.F., and a large group of us American graduates of these schools were transferred to the American army.

For a time I was assigned to the training of newly arrived Americans at Tours, but eventually American flying units began to leave for the front, and I was ordered to join one of them, for daylight bombing along the Somme.

This pleasant pastime occupied me until the end of the war, interrupted from time to time with periods of hospitalization resulting from the pursuit of an occupation which in those days was both exciting and strenuous.

My closest friends in the squadron of thirty-two American fliers were Bill Lindsey, Warren Hamilton, and Otto Heyworth. But there were continuous changes in personnel, replacements and transfers. Accident and death were, of course, the big items in our turnover. Of the thirty-two original members, only five lived to the Armistice, and one of the five was killed between Armistice Day and Christmas, while flying a Nieuport.

Death became a commonplace around our mess table. It

was an unmentioned commonplace—for by tacit agreement we never spoke to each other about it.

The arrival of the mail was about the most important event in our life. I kept up my correspondence with Chanti, with my mother in India, and with several of my Asia-born comrades at Wooster.

From Chanti and from my mother I learned that Tibet was again under the occupation of British troops. The Dalai Lama had enrolled as an ally of England and had actually offered to send a regiment of Tibetan soldiers to France. But he was advised against this by Britain, on the ground that Central Asia itself might present some unexpected problems, for which he would need whatever armed strength he could marshal.

The "unexpected problems" came with the break-up of Imperial Russia. Soviet influence began to spread, and Soviet hatred of religion struck at the heart of the Tibetan theocracy. The Dalai Lama appealed to England for help, and a column of 5000 Indian native troops was sent to reinforce his authority and to protect India against the spread of Bolshevik propaganda from Turkestan, Mongolia and China.

The result had not been all that could have been desired. But in Chanti's opinion it was definitely a step forward. He liked the idea of Anglo-Tibetan friendship and co-operation, and he was rather fatalistic about the rise and spread of Bolshevism. He pointed out that Tibet's new difficulties clearly showed an inherent weakness in the structure of the Lama Empire, and that if Tibet was vulnerable on account of its religion, there must be some new alignment to separate more clearly the governmental and religious functions of the rulers.

On all the fringes of Lamaism—in Mongolia, Turkestan and Manchuria—religion was threatened with extinction by the first real opposition it had encountered in five hundred years, the product of the new crusade from Moscow. In Mongolia, most of the local Lamaist incarnations, together with their leading supporters, fled as refugees to Peking or Tibet.

I kept in touch with India along the battle-front in France by fraternizing with the Indian troops, who were always delighted to find somebody who could speak with them in

their native Hindustani. Hardly a week passed without a visit to the Thirty-fourth Poona Horse, who were encamped on the shores of a lake near Goulaincourt. The whole regiment had been "dismounted" for duty as infantrymen in the trenches with half the strength always at the front and the other half "resting" in the tented camp with their idle horses.

I was more welcome as a guest at Goulaincourt than the commander-in-chief of the Allied armies would have been. The regiment had been in France since 1914 and had lost all its original English officers except one. The new officers spoke no Hindustani and had no way of keeping up the morale of the troopers. Indian soldiers found the climate of France difficult; the routine of trench warfare was an insult to veteran cavalrymen; for three years they had not seen their wives, children and relatives. The replacements from India were callow youths, and the upsetting tales they brought of conditions in the homeland were magnified and distorted by many factors besides mere distance.

But out of it all I was able to gather a fairly correct current picture of trends and tendencies in India that were to lead later to plenty of trouble for the British Raj, preventing England from taking any large part in the destinies of Tibet and China.

My knowledge of China was kept fresh and up-to-date by my friendship with officers of the Chinese labour battalions near Amiens. These groups were generally commanded by Englishmen from China, full of salty comment on the growing chaos of the Chinese interior, the continuing aggressions of the Japanese and the mystery of the new Russian republics in Siberia.

Captain Jim Duffy, for instance, had just come from Haichow when I first met him in France. He had brought 2000 coolies and overseers, recruited from the mountains of southern Shantung. He told a vivid story of civil war in this area.

Duffy was bitter about Japan's conduct in China. He had owned a small peanut-exporting business in the German city of Tsingtao, which had been ruined by the Japanese siege and occupation of the strategic harbour. He particularized endlessly on the unsportsmanlike way in which Japan had conducted its attack on Tsingtao, violating Chinese neutrality in a 200-mile overland march across the Shantung fields,

spreading 100,000 armed men in garrisons up and down the Yangtze River, and insulting China's sovereignty with a list of twenty-one peremptory "demands" which made China little more than a vassal of Tokyo.

Another Chinese labour corps was under a British shipping agent who had spent much time, before the war, in Vladivostok, and whose favourite subject of conversation was Siberia. He predicted an Allied occupation of Siberia and was vehement against the Russian traitors who had taken advantage of the Soviet revolution to dismember the Tsar's Eastern Empire. Such fantastic "republics" as Amur and Transbaikalia were to him merely centres of lawlessness and licensed brigandage.

One day he mentioned the Sovietized "Far Eastern Republic," with an alleged capital at Urga, Mongolia. This got my attention immediately, for to me Urga was one of the three great centres of the Tibetan religion. Everything he said confirmed what Chanti had told me about anti-religious Soviet propaganda on the frontiers of Lamaism. What could be done about it? I asked him. "Arm the lamas," he suggested. "Give them guns and cannon, and let 'em defend their frontiers. Maybe they'll get ambition and push the whole crew of bandits out of Siberia!"

Flying over trench-torn France day after day recalled my earliest flights with kites at Simtolah, the combats and tourneys at Almorah, and our ancient discussions of the flying chicken invented by the Wright brothers.

On my first trip over the lines, I had suddenly remembered the phrase which the Panchan Lama had used to Chanti when they rode together down the cog-wheel railway at Darjeeling: "I know how an eagle feels."

There were other trips, however, on which I felt not at all like an eagle. My work in the bombing squadron had little of the romance that I had pictured as the lot of an army aviator. Except when the Germans were after us, it was a dull routine, about as exciting as driving a pack mule between the Almorah barracks and the caravanserai. Once, twice or three times a day I would start out with my one passenger, a French bombardier. My machine would be one of a formation of five Bréguets, each carrying two 90-pound bombs, or four 45-pounders, or eight 25-pounders, depending upon our mission. Thus

HOLY CARPET OF LAMAISM

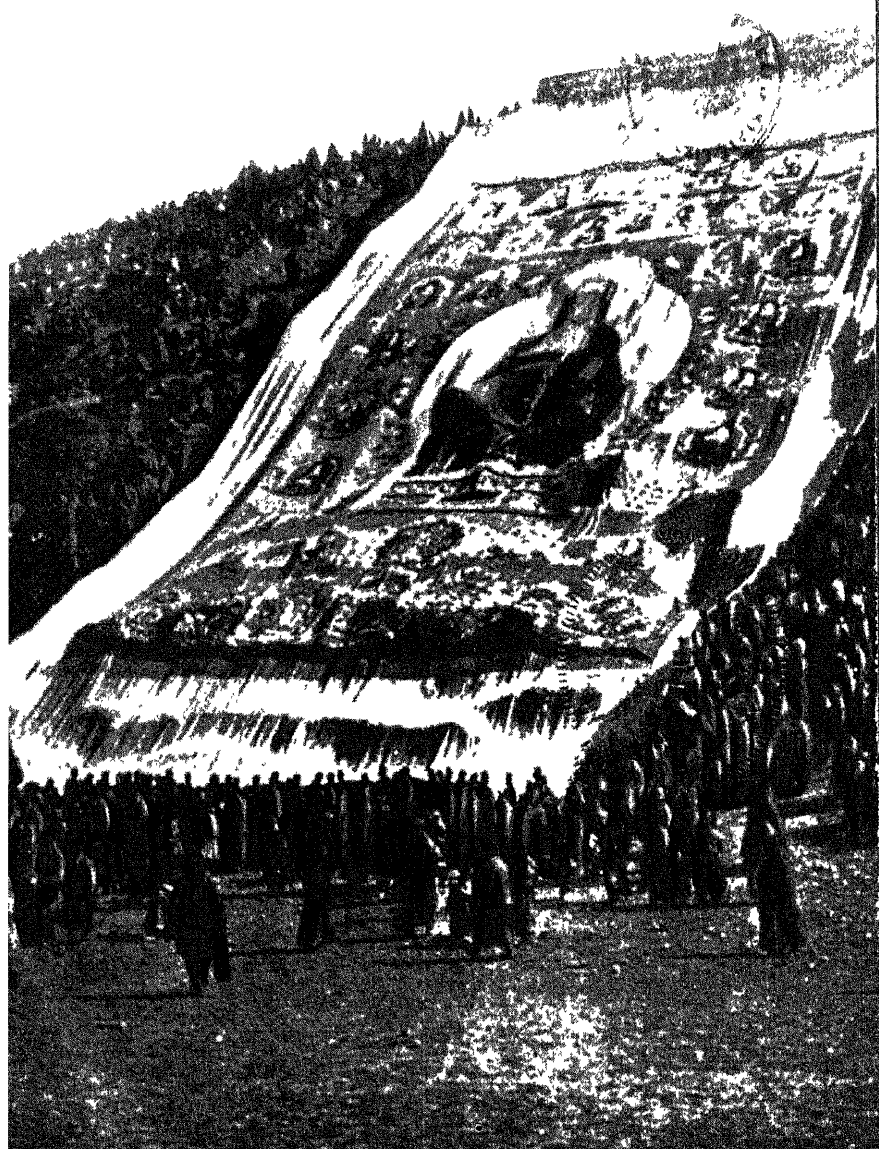
(Illustration facing page 160)

One of the great religious festivals of Western Tibet is the annual unrolling of the holy carpet of Tsong-kapa. The carpet is always shown on a steep hillside near the great monastery which is its custodian. For a whole day it is held aloft on the heads of thousands of monks, while it is viewed by pilgrims and travellers along the great tea trail from China to Lhasa. It is made of yak wool, gaudily dyed in red, blue, yellow, white and black. The central figure is a representation of Tsong-kapa, who was King of Tibet twelve centuries ago and who founded the present Lamaist religion. Both he and his two wives are incarnated; one of his wives is known as the White Tara, the other is the Green, or Jade, Tara. When the first Indian rupees bearing Queen Victoria's head made their appearance in Tibet, popular opinion canonized this picture as a representation of the White Tara, and eventually the belief that Victoria was the reincarnation of Tsong-kapa's queen became a regular feature of Lamaism.

TRAIL BLAZING ON TOP OF THE WORLD

(Illustration facing page 161)

Some of the difficulties of the Younghusband expedition, in its winter march to Phari, are indicated in this picture. Besides the obvious torture of jagged rock and steep ascent, there are such less obvious difficulties as mountain-sickness and snow-blindness. The daily march is always through snow, drifting and treacherous, or through ice and sleet and bitter wind, at lung-bursting altitudes. Altitudes are such that any violent physical exertion brings acute exhaustion, resembling a paralysis. All movement or work has to be slowed down to the tempo of the altitude.





heavily laden, we would set off with the speed of a freight train to a distant railhead or an important ammunition dump.

Our bombing squadron was used by the staff exactly as if it had been a battery of extremely long-range artillery. Its chief function was to place high explosives on targets often 150 miles distant. For the purpose of designating those targets it was teamed with air photography and reconnaissance units, and with the advance observation posts and Intelligence sections of the army.

Whenever these services learned about an emplacement of enemy heavy guns, an important ammunition dump, a new railhead or a vital bridge, out of range of the Allied batteries, they would mark it down for destruction by the bomb carriers of the air. Every possible aid was given to us bombing pilots to make sure of our successfully locating our target—Intelligence reports were confirmed by aerial photographs wherever possible, and large-scale maps were accurately prepared for us, with every available landmark identified and the latest information chartered as to exactly where our cargo of explosives should be dropped to do the maximum damage.

For us, the mere studying of air photographs and maps was not sufficient. We must also study the weather, the direction and intensity of the prevailing winds at each 1000-foot level, and the variations in air currents at different hours of the day. All these facts, catalogued for our benefit as often as four times a day, must be carefully weighed by each raiding pilot.

The enemy's probable activities in the sector we were visiting must also be studied and mentally predicted with as much accuracy as possible. We must know what enemy air squadrons were opposite us, their fighting technique, strength and aptitude. We must know where every anti-aircraft battery was located and the skill of its crew. Any overnight changes, noted by the reconnaissance planes, must be taken into consideration.

On every trip which the squadron made there was first of all a meeting of pilots and bombardiers for final instructions, while the motors were being warmed up by the mechanics. Every important detail of the raid and its objective would be gone over. There would be a check-up by each pilot of his gas, oil, ammunition and bombs. At last everything was ready: each crew of two settled in cockpits, motors roared at full speed, chocks were removed from under wheels, and one at a

time the planes of the squadron taxied forth and took the air. Circling the aerodrome, each pilot in succession would fly over a white target in the centre of the field and fire several bursts at it with his machine-gun, just to make sure it was working right.

At an appointed rendezvous, a few miles from the aerodrome, our machines would take a tight V-shaped formation behind the squadron leader, and we would head by the most direct compass route for our objective.

As we approached our target, still in formation unless something had occurred to separate us, our bombardiers got ready to do their day's work. By reins attached to the pilot's arm, the leading bombardier would bring the formation exactly upwind or downwind, so that the bombs when released would not "drift" off the target on their long trip earthward. A few hurried "sights" would be taken from each plane with the aid of stop-watches, and then would come the signal for pilots to "hold steady."

One at a time the bombs would leave the plane. We would lean far over the side, ignoring everything else in the world except the bombs and the foreshortened black geyser of earth which spouted up from each one as it struck ground. When all our bomb racks were emptied, the leader would dip his wings deeply to right and left, indicating the direction of our homeward turn with a wave of his arm. Then, still maintaining our formation as best we could, we would high-tail away toward home. If nothing happened, we would be there in an hour, or at most, seventy-five minutes.

The most that could happen was an encounter with enemy air fighters. Generally speaking, we rather enjoyed meeting them. What we lacked in speed and manoeuvrability, we made up in superior armament: the Fokkers were single-seaters and the pilots had to do their own sharpshooting. Our machines were two-seaters, and each of our pilots were reinforced by a reliable bombardier whose attention was focused solely on the business of putting a bullet from his flexible Lewis-gun in the place where it would do the most good.

Aside from the Fokkers, there was on this sector one squadron of grey German Rumplers which seemed to nurse a special grudge against our unit. They used to ambush us,

on our way homeward, taking advantage of the fact that in this direction we usually had to buck the prevailing winds. The Rumpler leader would pick on any gaps in our formation, through which to drive the wedge of his attack. His judgment was frequently rewarded with success in scattering us, and thereafter it was each man for himself and "devil take the hindmost." We used this phrase about him so often that he became generally known around the aerodrome as the "Grey Devil."

It was on one of my "good" days, thank God, that he showed me what the business end of his Spandau looked like. I had been flying beautifully, effortlessly, on a trip to a new ammunition dump, which I had credited to myself with having blown to smithereens. We had started out in a cold damp grey dawn; half-way to our objective the sun came out, bright and clear, and on the homeward journey its warming rays seemed the prelude to a good breakfast, a smoke and a well-earned nap.

I was loafing along at the Number Five position on the outside right of our formation, my mind on pleasant things, when I got the most unpleasant surprise of my life. Just as my ears reported an ominous rattle over my right shoulder, there came a stream of lead past my cheek. It tore a hole out of my flying clothes over the crook of my left arm, which was extended to reach the throttle.

I precipitately left the formation in a vrille, the start of a spinning nose dive, which has the virtue of enabling a trapped flier to come off in a controlled turn in any direction. As a defensive move in a tight corner, it gives one a few seconds of breathing space.

I came out to find the Grey Devil still on my tail. I prepared to slew around, so as to give my bombardier a chance to shoot. But a quick glance behind me revealed that he had slumped down into the cockpit, killed by the German's first burst.

With no help from my bombardier, it was a single-handed duel between the German and me, with the odds heavily in his favour. The feeling I got at that instant was that there was nobody else in the world except the Grey Devil and myself.

I waited for an instant, watching the black muzzle of his gun as he turned it in slow arcs, seeking to get a bead on me. When I thought he was ready to pull the trigger, I kicked over into another vrille and lost another 250 feet of altitude.

He was fast as lightning on Nanda Devi. When I looked

hopefully over my shoulder, as I levelled out, he was still riveted to my tail.

Time and again we repeated this performance. All the time I was losing altitude, but I was also working my way toward home and safety.

Time and again his Spandau poised itself to deliver its stream of bullets, but each time I managed to outguess him by the fraction of a second and his burst missed me and ripped angrily through my wing fabric. As I reached the level of the tree-tops on my last possible vril, he swung away in a climbing turn, while I pushed across no-man's-land, my nose pointed upward.

There were thirty holes in my wings when I landed—and when you remember that a burst from a Spandau, whether of three or seven rounds, makes only one large jagged hole, it may be judged how many close calls I had packed into that rapid series of vrills.

The photographic impression that his bursts made on my retina was so sharp that I could indelibly remember, after I reached safety, the spitting blue trail of his tracer bullets—probably one in three on his ammunition belt.

I had been pretty lucky that day. But there had also been a certain element of skill on my part, in my escape. My long series of quick steps downward from sky to earth had been timed with a perfect accuracy that actually was a surprise to me as I thought it over afterward. Undoubtedly, it was one of my good days—perhaps the best of them all.

Not all my experiences in the air were as satisfactory as this one. It was on another sector that I had the worst of all my bad days.

I had been ordered to take an old Caudron plane back to the factory near Paris, to exchange it for a new Bréguet. It was mid-winter, and I took off in overcast, threatening weather. The plane was both obsolete and much the worse for wear.

Half-way to Paris I ran into heavy snow, which cut down visibility to zero. The plane was not capable of rising above the snow, so I tried to come down under the clouds, close to the housetops. But this was not much better. It was necessary to land, and fortunately I knew of a small French aerodrome at the town of Pontlevoy, where I could stop for the night.

I landed without mishap on the white frozen field, my

temper considerably ruffled over missing a long-anticipated evening at the Folies Bergère, where I had expected to meet several American fliers from other units.

I was still in a great hurry next morning.

I should have subjected the old bus to a thorough-going inspection before I left the ground, but I was too fed up to give the time to it. I took off in a cloud of flying snow, and ran into my first trouble when I found my automobile road map practically useless in a snow-covered country-side.

I had failed to check my petrol at Pontlevoy, and in about two hours' time my gauge told me that I would have to refill at Châteaudun. I approached the town with the aerodrome away over on my left, and in my hurry to get there I made a steep verticle turn, winding the old Caudron up as tightly as possible.

Something had been weakened by the snow and cold of the night before. As I got well into the turn, the overhang on the top wing folded down, against the lower wing.

The machine went into a violent sideslip. The broken overhang pressed against the tip of the lower wing, and in less time than it takes a Gurkha to flash a *kukri* the struts gave way, and both wings rolled up under me.

I proceeded to slip toward earth, wounded side down, with all my wires shrieking.

There is not much to be done under such circumstances. Nothing can stop the force of gravity. I hit the ground with the force of a Tibetan avalanche. The plane buried its motor well into the frozen ground, and catapulted the fuselage and me thirty yards or so down the field.

It was three weeks before I returned to my unit, a sadder but wiser young flier with a limp and a lame lung which later sent me to the hospital for another four months. I have never flown a Caudron since, but if I ever do, I shall be exceedingly careful to inspect every strut and wire before the take-off.

However, as I look back on my experiment in wingless landing at Châteaudun, I realize the truth of the old adage that every dark cloud has its silver lining. It was during the period of my convalescence that I had an opportunity to learn more about China than I had ever known before. Working as an orderly in the Savenay hospital was a young man whom I had last seen two years before at Wooster. He was Ernest Hayes of Shantung, whose father was one of the greatest

living authorities on the Chinese language and literature, and head of a theological school near Weihsien. Hayes had been a student at Wooster for some time, but had left there to complete his college course at Princeton. He had come to France with a medical unit from New York. A few weeks after I left hospital, he received a commission in the infantry and was transferred to a responsible post in command of a Chinese labour battalion at Montoir, where his linguistic ability and knowledge of China were of great value.

While I was in the hospital, a convalescent "walking case," we were together a great deal. We discussed every conceivable angle of the Oriental arts, religion, politics and civilization. Hayes was much interested in Lamaism, and in my descriptions of the Panchan Lama, God in human form, walking up and down the shaded paths of his wooded garden, planning for the future of his people. Because we were both intensely interested in aviation, we speculated frequently on the future of flying in Asia. In our imaginations we pictured the crowded aerodromes of wartime France transferred to peace-time activities in China, pulling together the far-flung boundaries of the staggering expanses of the Asiatic continent, speeding communication, binding nations, creating a new civilization.

Little did I think, as we talked together, that within ten years I would be flying in Asia, and that a few years later I would be watching the Panchan Lama himself a-wing in Chinese skies.

CHAPTER FOUR

DON'T GO TO ASIA

Signs and portents ! Omens, guesses !
Auguries in sundry dresses !
Daily does he hawk his wares
In the crowded thoroughfares,
Durga, *jadugar* supreme—
He can tell you why you dream,
What to do for Visions, Ghosts
And the other Spectral Hosts.
His clairvoyance is so great
He can even calculate
What's inside your purse and know
What to tell you that you owe
For his auguries and guesses
In their multifarious dresses.

—*Parable of Durga the Fortune-teller*

THE aviation service, perhaps more than any other branch of the army, had its lighter moments—in a great and varied abundance. The tension and strain of war flying demanded relief and relaxation in wholesale quantities, and we fliers were as conscientious about enjoying ourselves as we were about harassing the enemy.

This was only common sense. The most patriotic of us soon realized that war was another name for bunk; and one way to forget the bunk was to have a good time as often as possible.

We exhausted all the merrymaking possibilities of the neighbouring villages; we knew every wineshop and *estaminet* within motoring distance of the aerodrome. And leave in Paris was as precious as the Croix de Guerre.

For the American aviators there were two Paris landmarks that practically amounted to headquarters for rendezvous and gossip. The Chatham Bar was the day-time gathering point, with Harry-the-Barkeep as a master of ceremonies who knew the precise whereabouts of every American airman in France. But in the evening, the *promenoir* of the Folies Bergère was

the main centre, and here Olga was the presiding genius for the U.S. Air Service.

Olga was a polished strumpet who specialized exclusively in American fliers. She had a round table on the right of the parquet entrance, facing the bar. This table she always occupied when not otherwise engaged.

As a reservoir of current news, Olga made Harry-the-Barkeep look like an amateur. For while Harry could only tell us where our fellow-officers were officially located, Olga knew where they spent their nights, what was going on in their heads, and the state of their pocket-books.

Olga was a Russian brunette of perhaps twenty-nine summers. Slender and graceful in an oddly quick way, she dressed neatly but conservatively, and differed from the other *promenoir* girls in her restrained use of rouge and perfume. She spoke English with a French accent, and French with an American accent, the latter deliberately acquired from her friends in the air service. She had a flair for "managing," and her mind was a card index of information about men and things.

One sat down at her table with an assurance that in five minutes he would learn everything of importance about the American aviators in France—who had been killed, wounded or taken prisoner; who was in hospital, and why; who had been transferred, and where; who had fought a good fight, and how; who had been promoted, visited Paris, or would be in town on leave next week.

We called her the "unofficial Intelligence Service." She flattered us, cajoled us, humoured us. She knew how to order a meal, and her taste in wine was as competent as it was expensive.

I invariably made a point of seeing her on the first evening of every visit to Paris, in order to put myself *en rapport* with the latest tidings of my scattered comrades. The cost of this news service was only the price of a couple of rounds of drinks, a package of Olga's favourite Egyptian cigarettes and—invariably—a box of chocolates from the tray of the peripatetic candy girl.

The cigarette and candy business at the Folies Bergère was a racket. When Olga ordered a box of her beloved Abdullahs she always placed it carefully in her handbag, unopened, so that she could later sell it back to the cigarette girl. When

somebody bought her a box of chocolates, she was equally careful to place the box with seals unbroken, behind her chair, with a smiling "thank you" and an explanation that she would save it "until she went home."

Olga always stuck me for the most expensive box of chocolates, priced at forty francs. There was only one box of its kind on the tray, and it had been bought and rebought so many times that its wax-paper wrapping began to show definite signs of wear and tear.

It was perhaps my fifteenth visit to Paris before I thought of rebelling against this rite of petty larceny. I don't know why the idea entered my head on that occasion—perhaps it was one of my bad days; perhaps it was because I was accompanied by a British officer from the Thirty-fourth Poona Horse, whom I had lately met on the front in Picardy, and we were both of us pretty low on funds. I had told him about the ancient box of chocolates that was always being sold and resold, and we had agreed that we would not be trapped. So, when the candy girl approached our table, I bluntly waved her away, and my British comrade backed me up with a curt "No thanks, we're not having any."

Olga protested. "But certainly, I want some chocolates, very much," she pouted.

When we persisted in our refusal to buy, Olga indicated that she might be satisfied with "a very little box." At this, I unfortunately weakened and motioned the candy girl to hold the tray down to the table.

Olga immediately retrieved all the ground she had yielded. Once she saw the tray at close range, she reached for that same forty-franc box.

My British friend put out his arm and restrained her, pointing to a much smaller box. "Not a *son* more than fifteen francs," he ultimatumed sternly.

She appealed to me. "That would be almost an insult, would it not, to take a so-little box?" she inquired, with a forced smile.

He maintained his hold on her arm, and I gave her no answer but a grim shake of the head.

She tried a new tack. "Please," she said pleadingly to us. "If you will buy me the big box, I will go without the bottle of wine that I was going to order."

"All right, Olga," I said. "We'll buy it for you—but only if

you let us open the box, here and now. We also are very hungry for chocolates—nougat, I think, for me, and perhaps a peppermint or two for my friend.”

We didn’t let her take the box from the tray. I took it myself, and held it at arm’s length away from her while my companion paid the candy girl the required forty francs, plus the customary *pourboire*.

Then, very deliberately, I started to open the ancient package. Olga reached over and tried to stop me. I looked up at her face. It was hardened into an angry determination. One would have thought somebody was about to violate the tombs of her ancestors or commit a dreadful crime. She turned to my companion.

“Don’t let him do it,” she threatened, with iron in her voice. Then to me, “Don’t do it, or you’ll be sorry—very sorry—very, very sorry.”

But I was stubborn. I tore off the seal, and then the glazed paper wrapper. Olga’s eyes grew big and round in stunned astonishment at my audacity.

Then, as I lifted the cardboard cover and threw it on the floor, under my foot, she became suddenly vocal. She didn’t even glance at the mouldy chocolates in the box. She let loose a torrent of vituperation that seemed to fill the room.

All the eyes in the place turned toward our table, and people began to move toward us, as though here was a spectacle worth enjoying.

Anxiously my companion and I tried to shush her into silence, but she only moved into a higher key, and half rose in her chair, the better to aim her vocal salvos.

It occurred to us that we had urgent and immediate business elsewhere. Without further delay, we rose and fled. The last words we heard, shouted half-way across the big room and punctuated with a few racy adjectives, were:

“You’ll be sorry, Messieurs—very sorry!”

I never visited Olga again. But she made good her threat, at least so far as I was concerned. She revenged herself quite cleverly. For two months thereafter, she spread to every visitor, as part of her regular grist of air service news, an ingenious story of my death at the front, which was accepted unquestioningly by most of my comrades on distant sectors of

the line. To this day I occasionally run into a man who thinks I'm a ghost.

I came very near becoming one, too, on the fifth day of the fifth Chinese moon in the year of the Mouse.

That particular day was the Dragon Boat Festival, which all good Chinese must celebrate with bunting, firecrackers, pageantry and feasting. Even on the western front, in the midst of a world war, the mandatory nature of this observance could not be ignored by any pious Chinese. The coolies of the labour battalion at Villers-Bretonneux, therefore, had to be given a day off from the urgent work of keeping the road open to Albert and Peronne.

My friend, Captain Barr-Desmond, who commanded the battalion, was an old China hand. He sent me a chit the day before, inviting me to come over and watch the coolies celebrate. Fortunately my only flight that day was a morning one, so that I was able to get to Barr-Desmond's headquarters about noon. He and his three subalterns were housed in a portable wooden hut, just outside the barbed-wire enclosure where the coolies were quartered.

I could see, by the litter of red paper all over the field, that the "celebration" was over. That it had been a gala day was evident from the vast quantities of the paper shells of exploded firecrackers. I chided Barr-Desmond for bringing up firecrackers in army transport, when all the units were short of so many necessities.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Anybody can see you've never been in China," he said, "or you'd know that a Chinese wouldn't work without firecrackers. They're part of his religion—if he has any. Without crackers to frighten away the evil spirits, these fellows would be sure the Huns would win chop-chop."

But the captain was fed up with coolies. If to-day was a holiday, he wanted to get as far away from them as possible.

"Let's go for a picnic," he suggested. "I've got two magnums of champagne that I've been saving for a month. We'll find a nice shady spot and forget this confounded war for the day."

I knew the right place, a meadow with a little stream that widened into an ideal swimming hole. But it was fourteen miles

away, in a French sector of the line, certainly too far to walk. What would we do for transportation? I asked him.

"Leave that to me, old bean," said the captain, with a wink.

He was expecting a light lorry with a load of rice for his coolies. When it came and had been unloaded, he told the tommy who was driving it to join his men over their beer and woodbines in the barracks.

"Don't be in any hurry to get back here, either," he said to the driver, "for I've got a little job of work to do with this car."

The driver looked dubious, for it was a direct contravention of orders to hand over his truck to anyone. But he hardly dared argue the matter out with a captain. He saluted smartly and walked off.

With Barr-Desmond driving, we set out for our picnic spot. I guided him to it without difficulty, but there was no regular roadway into our meadow. There was a German sausage balloon so close that we knew we ought to get our truck out of sight. With a little difficulty we manœuvred the lorry across the ditch paralleling the road, then forced it over the low mud wall and parked it beneath some trees.

We found our swimming pool and went for a plunge before lunch. The water was cool and invigorating, and we splashed around for half an hour, until the thought of food and champagne drove us back to the lorry.

We spread out a raincoat, and arranged on it our feast: loaf bread, butter, a tin of damson jam, a large jar of *pâté de foie gras*—and the two giant bottles of gold-foiled "bubbly."

As an "appetizer" we killed one whole bottle. A quart apiece. This considerably brightened our outlook on life and made the rather scanty meal look like a banquet. We had got to the stage where we were spreading our bread with butter, *pâté de foie gras* and damson jam all together, and I was just starting to take my first generous bite of this newly invented delicacy, when a noise like seven million Chinese firecrackers shook the air around us.

"Holy Moses!" exclaimed Barr-Desmond, reaching with a protective arm for the remaining magnum of champagne.

I dropped my over-loaded slice of bread on to an anthill.

We turned toward the source of the deafening blast. Our mouths dropped open, and we both started laughing at once.

Through the near-by hedge we could now see what we had not seen before, an anti-aircraft battery of four French 75's, with their camouflage screens torn off, rapid-firing at a droning Hun high overhead.

Reassured, but by no means completely calmed, we promptly resorted to the second magnum and continued our meal. The battery went back into the silences. We drank their health generously. Then we toasted the unknown benefactor who had invented the Dragon Boat Festival. Then, having become pretty maudlin, we drank to each other, to the anxious lorry driver waiting at the barracks, to the commander-in-chief and to Mademoiselle from Armentières.

On this last toast we finished the bottle, and both dropped back on the green grass for a nap.

We had hardly closed our eyes when the ominous growl of a distant klaxon brought us both to our feet, almost automatically. The first growl was followed by answering klaxons, coming nearer and nearer. It was gas, poison gas!

We looked at each other, a little befogged. We had no gas-masks! What to do?

Suddenly, like champion sprinters, we both started on a run for the anti-aircraft battery, behind the hedge.

The French sous-lieutenant had seen us picnicking, and showed no surprise at our panting request for masks. Fortunately he had some extra ones, which he presented to us with a ceremonious politeness which for some reason seemed very funny.

We had a little difficulty adjusting the masks, which were of the early French type, consisting of a pair of goggles and a long sack of thick medicated cotton padding, with a wire frame to be fitted around the face as tightly as possible.

The mask lacked the "breathing outlet" of later models, and was never meant to be worn for more than a few minutes. When donned by a panting man, it became almost suffocating.

We were not only panting, but also full of champagne, which has a tendency to make its own demands upon the lungs.

Thoroughly uncomfortable, and effectively muzzled, we resorted to sign language to tell each other that we had better get into our lorry and clear out for home.

As the motor started, in response to an energetic cranking by me, the first yellow clouds of gas enveloped us. Even the motor sputtered painfully as it gasped for oxygen.

Barr-Desmond was at the wheel. He had done a pretty neat trick of steersmanship in getting us to our parking place. Now, between his haste over the gas and his cargo of bubbly, he seemed less competent than before. He made rough going over the field to the mud wall. He hit the wall at an angle instead of straight-on. One wheel climbed the wall, but before the other one came off the field, the truck was hung, high and dry, on the engine crank-case. No amount of effort at either backing or trying to push ahead budged it an inch.

We got out our jack, and went to work trying to shift the 4000-pound weight off its anchorage. Ordinarily this would have been no great job, but we were being gassed from both inside and outside and were getting closer and closer to strangulation.

By this time we were cold stone-sober and completely aware of our danger. The more we realized that it was imperative to keep our masks on, the more our bursting lungs demanded their instant removal.

There was no chance of our being able to walk out of the gas zone. Our only avenue of escape was to get the truck free.

So we kept on trying, with temples pounding and faces blackening. Every movement was a torment, and we were slowly losing our power of sight. Inevitably we weakened and slowed down, and the only thought in our heads was the dreadful chant, endlessly repeated: "You mustn't take your mask off. . . . You musn't take your mask off. . . . You mustn't take your mask off."

I watched Barr-Desmond sink down on the grass in front of the lorry, twitch convulsively several times in an effort to rise, and then lie still. I tried to go to his aid, but couldn't move a muscle and found myself sinking into blackness. . . .

I woke up with a terrific rattling in my head. Instinctively I felt for my mask, but it had been removed. Before opening my eyes I took a few tentative breaths to assure myself that I was not still in the gas belt.

Then I looked around me. I was lying in the bottom of an empty ammunition truck. Barr-Desmond was beside me, still unconscious. We were bumping over a cobbled road and presently stopped among the ruins of a small village.

We got back to the coolie camp well after dark. The lorry driver was already more than a bit worried, and when we

returned minus his truck, with the news that it was marooned on top of a mud bank fourteen miles away, he showed signs of bursting into tears. Barr-Desmond had to telephone the transport officer and take responsibility for what had happened. Unhappily he and the transport officer were ancient enemies, and the telephone receiver squawked and smoked with the violence of the language coming from the other end. The final verdict from the M.T.O. was that unless Barr-Desmond got the truck back to its park before daylight, charges would be preferred against him.

I had to go back to my unit, but Barr-Desmond and the anxious truck driver spent most of the night at the scene of our pleasant picnic.

There is one experience of my period of war service in France which is often in my thoughts, particularly when I am in the Orient, where the predictions and warnings of soothsayers, necromancers and *jadugars* are frequently taken seriously by people who otherwise are entirely intelligent.

This particular experience, even though I tell myself that it has no meaning or significance, keeps coming back to me, with a vague mental questioning as to whether it may not have some hidden implication of admonition or warning.

I am not superstitious in the slightest degree, and I have never taken any stock in the abracadabra of the supernatural. But there are certainly some things in the world that cannot be explained by the ordinary processes of logic and reason. My experience with Trooper Matti of the Thirty-fourth Poona Horse was like that: some of the things he said to me during the brief period when his delirium gave him the gift of tongues have certainly come true; others are very likely to do so; certainly none of his predictions has gone false. . . .

I had gone over to Goulaincourt late one afternoon to cheer up my Indian comrades on their way to the trenches. The weather was bad, and I knew that my trooper friends of the past two weeks were due to change over with the other half of the regiment on this night. Their brethren in the line had lately taken a severe hammering in a nasty salient which the Germans had been bombarding from three sides. Casualties had been severe, and there was a panicky feeling among the Indians that the worst was yet to come.

If there had been any English officers who were able to speak Hindustani and talk reassuringly to the troopers in their

TWO MILLION PRAYERS AT ONCE

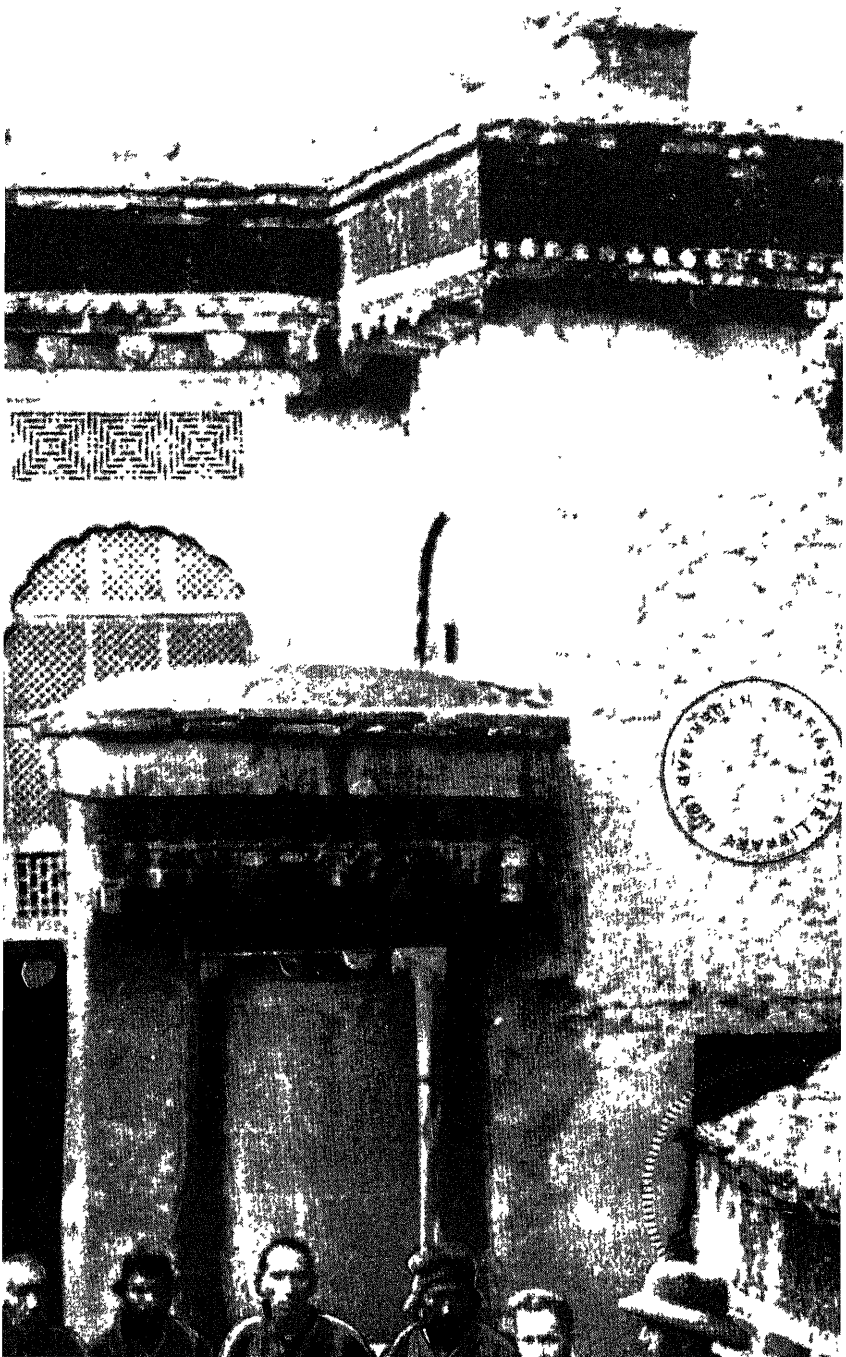
(Illustration facing page 176)

The largest prayer wheel in the vicinity of Almoiah is a bronze drum packed with 2,000,000 paper repetitions of the sacred sentence, *Om mani padme hum*. Green with the patina of age, it is spun thousands of times daily by visiting Lamaists, and its total prayer output averages twenty billions a day. A Lamaist who has been a bit slack in his prayers during the year can make it all up in a few minutes by visiting this monastery. If he gives the big wheel five minutes of his attention, he can run up a total that will outdo any ten of his pious gold-washing or sheep-herding brethren. Twenty spins of the big wheel give him an average for the year of more than 100,000 prayers a day. To credit himself with one prayer a minute for the whole year, he needs only a little more than 150 full turns of the wheel. On the way out, he marches around the courtyard and, for good measure, spins each one of 150 smaller prayer wheels, some of which are seen in the wall on the right.

SPANNING THE MOUNTAIN TORRENTS

(Illustration facing page 177)

Rope bridges along the Tibetan trails have their own peculiarities. The one shown in this photograph is in exceptionally good condition, although a few of the supporting strands in the foreground are broken. The cables are made from bamboo and cane stalks twisted together. Most of the bridges which are used frequently last for no more than three or four months, and then have to be replaced by the next arriving caravan. . . . The extra cables hanging on either side of the bridge are for repair purposes. The grade of the bridge is very steep, coming in this case from the top of the opposite bank to a low river-side trail on the near side. The cat-walk by which one crosses the bridge consists merely of eight or ten strands of cable. The animals are usually carried across the stream in slings attached to the repair cables. They cannot swim across, because the torrent is too swift and rocky.





own lingo, the situation could have been smoothed over easily by the usual process of laughing at all the rumours that floated through the ranks. Nothing reassures an Indian soldier like the nonchalance of an English laugh. But as things stood in the regiment, even the veteran Indian noncoms were half-convinced that the end was near at hand. To them the most disquieting thing was that they had no English troops to guard their flanks. The regiments to right and left of them were French, and the Poona Horse did not understand Frenchmen.

For two weeks I had tried to stand in place of their dead officers, but I couldn't see them often enough to hold them to my words of comfort. Perhaps I couldn't have done much better even if I had been there all the time, for I was not a cavalryman, and horse troops have a natural distrust of anything said by one not of their kind.

Matti was a wispy, wrinkled trooper whose head was only higher than the saddle of his horse by the thickness of his greasy black hair. He weighed about ninety-five pounds and might have been ninety-five years old. Ever since he had lost his brother-in-law in the retreat from Mons, picked off by a German sniper as he rode his horse along the top of a moonlit ridge, Matti had been a bit panicky and shell-shocked. The particular form which his ailment took was that he was afraid of the dark. He could not bear to be alone at night.

The officers of the regiment knew his story and overlooked his shortcomings as much as possible. But during the past two weeks, Matti had been getting worse, until even in daylight he had attacks of fright which caused him to shake like a man with ague.

I had talked with Matti, in an effort to bolster up his backbone, and had discussed his case with the giant subahdar major, who stood in the place of father and mother to him, and a group of his fellow troopers. According to the subahdar, Matti was possessed by strange devils. He was a Goanese who had wandered into the hills of Poona and had married a Poona woman. In doing this he had abjured the Catholic faith to which his forebears had been converted at the point of the sword by Portuguese adventurers four hundred years before. But he had compromised with his conscience by keeping his name, which means Matthew.

However, as a Goanese, he had no business becoming a

trooper. The Goanese, as everyone in India knows, are born to be sailors. For Matti, joining the cavalry was a far worse mistake than when he denied his true religion.

The subahdar's theory was that the gods of two faiths were fighting in Matti's soul to claim him. And at the same time the demons of the sea—the black water—were fighting with the earth-demons. This was too much for any human being to stand. The subahdar felt sure that Matti's mind and soul were crumbling under it all, and sooner or later he would collapse. In that moment, however, he would be inspired by god or demon, and the regiment was waiting to hear the truth that would come forth from him at that time.

I was wondering about Matti as I came up to the tented city among the trees. How would he take the summons which would come that night to go again into the horror of the trenches?

It was a sodden evening. The rain was falling heavily, throwing up brown spikes of water in the pools along the path. It was gloomy under the trees, and the steady rattle of the rain on drooping leaves was depressing. In the picket line, on the lake shore, the horses lowered their heads dejectedly and moved reluctantly a step or two as a handful of troopers sloshed around them.

The tents were ash-coloured, and I noted that most of the flaps had been drawn tightly shut. I had no impulse to sing out my usual welcome; I was too uncomfortable. Only the flap of the cook tent stood open, at the far side of the camp, and even there I could see nobody inside. Beyond it, however, at the edge of the wood, stood a group of hooded troopers with their backs toward me. Except that they moved uneasily from one foot to the other and craned their necks occasionally, they looked in their grey-white waterproofs like an unhealthy growth of giant mushrooms.

I came up to them without being noticed, and looked to see what they were watching. My first thought was that it might be a burial.

But it was only Matti. He was on his hands and knees in the grass, in a little crescent of open ground. Half clothed, he moaned feverishly as he swung from side to side. His hair hung wildly over his shoulders, and now and then he looked up, red-eyed, at the silent group around him.

Occasionally he would tear up handfuls of wet grass and

stuff it in his mouth. Then he would shake his head violently, chew at the grass and finally swallow it with loud gasps and sobs.

I edged over to one of the troopers. He greeted me in a subdued voice.

"You are his friend," he said. "Perhaps he will listen to you."

I pushed through the group and stood close to Matti. He looked up at me, but I could detect no recognition. I spoke to him in Hindustani, but he gave no answer.

I had seen this sort of thing in Almorah, and knew therefore that Matti had been stricken with the Biblical disease which once sent the great king Nebuchadnezzar to live in the fields like his own cattle. The Indians call it "sheep's disease," perhaps because the patient is supposed to give off the unmistakable odour of sheep at close range. English doctors say it is a kind of nervous indigestion, ordinarily associated with improperly balanced vegetable diets.

A young English subaltern came up while I was trying to attract the stricken man's attention. "What on earth's got into him?" he asked me.

I started to tell him what little I knew of this particular ailment, but Matti suddenly tensed to alertness. I could see that he recognized me now, even though his eyes were like two round balls of chinaware.

"Ai-hai," he screamed, pointing his finger at me. "Make room, everyone! I will prophesy for the American!"

The crowd fell back a little, but every trooper was straining to listen. They thought they knew what was coming. The subahdar was right. The battle of the devils had been too much for Matti. The moment had come when the demons would speak.

A greenish foam flecked the corners of Matti's mouth. He swung his arms wildly in a circle as if to indicate a line which no one might cross. The young subaltern glanced nervously at his watch: it was nearly time to form the men for their march to the front.

Matti had been half erect for a few moments. Now he squatted on his haunches, and seized a switch of osier which lay on the ground. With his finger he drew a rough square between the sodden tufts of trampled grass. Then he stood the switch on its end in the middle of the square, holding his

forefinger over the top as if to balance it and make it stand erect.

"Now let the sahib ask Matti a question," he commanded me in squeaky Hindustani.

I felt that the best way to deal with him was to humour him. If I gave him a few questions, perhaps he would quieten down. The first question that came into my mind was:

"Well, Matti, tell me if I shall ever see Asia again?" I spoke slowly, softly, in Hindustani, seeking to make my words as soothing and casual as possible.

He closed his eyes with an expression of weariness. Then opened them again as he took his forefinger gently off the top of the switch and watched the stick topple slowly over toward the corner of the square nearest me.

Deliberately he lifted his eyes until they centred on my face. They were clear but unseeing. All his muscles slacked off easily, and his chin tilted upward as if to help his eyes stay on their target. He was silent but his lips moved a little, as if he were forming words in his mind. Before he spoke, his eyes fell shut again.

"Yes, sahib, you will see Asia again, but not the familiar fields that you have known. You will know people, mighty ones, but not the ones you have known. You will do many things, but not the things you have done. You will speak tongues, but not those you used to speak. You will travel far, but not over the roads of the past."

He had begun in a monotone, gradually increasing in volume and tone until now he was screaming every word in sharp staccato. At last it was more than he could do. His breath was spent, and he gasped for air. He started to fall, then recovered himself with an effort and went on again, struggling hard to finish his message. His face was full of terror as he barked out the rest of it:

"Ah, sahib, I see it clearly now. . . . As surely as I, Matti, shall die this night in France, so surely will you, sahib, die in Asia. . . . You will die in Asia—die in Asia—die in Asia. . . ."

His voice failed and he fell in a heap on the muddy ground. I rushed forward to pick him up, and spoke to him. He was a long time in answering, and when he did, he was completely rational.

The subahdar and I put him on a cot in the hospital tent.

He was very weak, but his fever had gone, and he took a little nourishment quite normally.

I begged him to go to sleep, and rest. But he wanted to talk. Most of all, he wanted to know what he had said to me, out there under the trees. He remembered not a word of it.

When I told him, he apologized deeply for what he considered his impudence. He begged me to forget the whole thing.

"Asia is no place for you, sahib," he said. "Your gods and devils are different from ours. I have been ill, I think, because your Western devils are fighting my devils. In India, I would not be ill. Your devils may be stronger than mine, but they couldn't harm me in India."

He closed his eyes for a while, thinking. Then he resumed suddenly:

"You know too much already of Asia. Your devils will be envious. You must try to forget Asia, or you will have an illness worse than mine. It would kill you, sahib!"

Again he paused, and when he spoke once more it was with a certain impressive finality: "Yes, sahib, I am sure of it now. You must not go to Asia! I tell you, do not go to Asia. . . . Do not go to Asia!"

Exhausted, he dropped back on his pillow and slept. He was breathing regularly, and I had the feeling that he would awake the next morning refreshed and perhaps almost well.

So I left him, and went home to my billet at the aerodrome. Some time during the night his fellow-troopers marched again into the trenches. I didn't get back to Goulaincourt for several days.

"How's Matti?" I asked the first trooper I saw, hailing him gaily in the warm sunlight.

He shrugged his shoulders in the way Indians do when dismissing an unpleasant subject.

"Matti died the night you were here," he said grimly. Then as if adding a completely irrelevant but interesting fact: "You know, the tent smelled of sheep for two days afterward."

PART THREE

CHAPTER ONE

FALSTAFF IN CANONICALS

Let your soul move to and fro,
Else it will not bloom ;
Buddha let his stomach grow
To give his soul more room.

—*Invocation to the Laughing Buddha*

DESPITE Matti's warning, I had barely set foot in America, a free man, when I found myself headed for Asia, as a representative of the United States Department of Commerce in Shanghai and Peking. My ultimate objective was to complete my picture of Tibet and the Grand Lamas, and to find out whether there was any place for me to use the specialized knowledge which Chanti had so diligently implanted. My immediate objective was to act as secretary to the commercial attaché and to master the diplomatic details of trade promotion, information and protection.

In my Legation position I grew rapidly in the knowledge of Chinese officialdom and in acquaintance with Chinese leaders. I attended conferences on the foreign debts of the Chinese railroads; I sat in on endless discussions of the problems of the Inter-Allied Technical Board; I was an American delegate at the sessions of the important Tariff Revision Commission at Shanghai, and I participated in efforts to untangle the Japanese-American wireless imbroglio.

American interest in the Chinese railroad debts was centred in collection of a bill for several de luxe trains which had been delivered by W. W. Forbes and never paid for. There was also a little matter of a \$100,000,000 loan raised in America by the Siems-Carey group of railroad constructors to operate a concession in North China.

The Inter-Allied Technical Board was occupied with a tangle of intricate controversy between China and Russia, arising out of the post-war occupation of Vladivostok; American interest

in its problems was chiefly due to the fact that the head of the board was Colonel John W. Stevens, of the United States army.

The Tariff Revision Commission had been born at the Harding Peace Conference in Washington; it was a valiant effort, inspired by the usual American idealism, to give China her first tariff autonomy, but the diplomatic representatives of American idealism found themselves brushed aside and ignored by the spokesmen for Great Britain and Japan, who wrangled endlessly in determined efforts to gain practical trade advantages over each other.

My participation in the Japanese-American wireless controversy was specially significant, because it was my first personal contact with the Japanese spy system. On my way to China I had travelled with a group of Department of Commerce officials going via Hawaii and Japan. In our possession we had two copies of a secret code to be used in communicating with Washington. One copy was carried by me, the other by one of the higher officials. While crossing Japan, the latter had his copy in a suitcase, along with some of his personal belongings. This particular suitcase mysteriously disappeared en route. The Japanese railway officials were elaborately apologetic and made a great fuss over their attempts to trace and recover it. But their efforts were in vain, and the American diplomatic representative had to go on to China without it.

However, it seemed to be fairly clear that the incident was just one of the usual accidents of travel, and there was not one chance in a million that the secret instructions would be found and used for any improper purpose. Japan and the United States were on the most friendly terms, and it was beyond the belief of any of our officials that Japan would stoop to any such underhanded methods as the deliberate plundering of diplomatic baggage.

The loss of the code was unfortunate, of course, but it caused us no great inconvenience, as there was another copy in my possession.

During the next months we used it constantly for highly confidential messages dealing with our efforts to get fair play for the United States in the establishment of radio communication with Asia. Two companies, one Japanese and one American, had obtained monopolistic contracts from

different departments of the Chinese Government at Peking. The two contracts clashed in every particular, and the Japanese were making prodigious efforts to bar out the American concern.

We fought them strenuously and persistently, but found ourselves checked at every turn. On one occasion, when we got notification by code of the impending arrival of an important representative of the American wireless interests, whose mission would be hampered by publicity, we were surprised to find the platform of the Chienmen railway station crowded with Japanese and Chinese officials who could not possibly have been there by accident. There were plenty of other indications that the Japanese information service was acquainted with our every move. Some of us wondered whether our code messages were leaking into unexpected hands.

Six months later our worst fears were confirmed. The missing suitcase was suddenly returned to Peking from Japan. Everything in it was intact, even to the carefully sealed envelope containing the code. But examination of the envelope showed unmistakably that it had been steamed open and then resealed.

For all these months we had been operating with a code which was as easy for the Japanese to read as if the messages had been sent in plain English. Their access to our messages was not hard to understand, because all trans-Pacific cablegrams pass through Japanese hands at the relay station on the island of Yap, a tiny spot in mid-Pacific which was won by Japan over American protest at the Washington Disarmament Conference in 1922.

It may be said in passing that the American surrender of Yap to Japan was a blunder which the United States may some day find a great deal more serious than the matter of the wireless tangle.

During my period of official service in Peking I met most of the important figures of the Chinese life of that day, either at official functions or at the Hotel des Wagons-lits, where I lived. My wife, a girl from Montclair, New Jersey, whom I had met and married while she was in Red Cross service in France, was keenly interested in the life of the Chinese women and made many friends among them.

Thursday nights were gala occasions at the hotel—dinner

dances, attended by everybody of note in the city. Here I met Liang Shih-yi, the richest man in China, who had amassed about \$100,000,000 in a long career of office-holding; Ku Hu-ming, the Bernard Shaw of Asia, a vitriolic sage and graduate of Edinburgh, whose power through his writings was greater than that of any official; Hsu Chih-chuan, president of the new republic; Prince Kung, Manchu uncle of the boy Pu-yi who was later to become Emperor of Japanese Manchukuo; Ataman Semienoff, Cossack leader of the White Russian armies in Siberia; Baroness von Ungern-Sternberg, whose husband had tried to set up an anti-Bolshevist empire in Mongolia.

But more interesting to me than any of these was Prince Dilowa, then living in a palace of two hundred rooms not far from the Forbidden City where the deposed little emperor, Pu-yi, still held court.

Prince Dilowa was, in fact, none other than the Hutuketu of Urga, the great Lamaist incarnation of Mongolia. The name he used in Peking was one of his many lesser titles. At his seat in Urga he had given sanctuary to the Dalai Lama of Tibet for five long years after the arrival in Lhasa of the Younghusband expedition. Religiously, Prince Dilowa was the third highest figure in Lamaism; politically, he was the traditional ruler of the Mongolian steppes, mountains and deserts, an area half as large as the continent of Australia; spiritually he was the reincarnation of Taranatha-lama, who had brought the written word to Tibet and was therefore seated on the right hand of Buddha and his son-in-law in the Lamaist pantheon.

During my days in India, I had been more conscious of the Panchan and Dalai Lamas than of their northern counterpart. I had known, however, that the religion was based on the ancient doctrine of the trinity, with three great godheads, as in the Christian faith. No one of the three is more sacred than the other but, as in Christianity, they have somewhat different functions.

Of the three great incarnations, worshipped by their followers as God in human form, the Dalai Lama was the eldest, the Panchan the youngest, and the Hutuketu half-way between. As to their characters, Chanti had had definite ideas; the Dalai Lama was a dangerous schemer, the Panchan a genuine saint, the Hutuketu half-way between—namely, a

practical-minded personage with a fatherly and tolerant attitude toward his people.

At this time, the Panchan and Dalai Lamas were both in Tibet, living respectively at Tashilhunpo and Lhasa, separated physically by 200 miles of upland, politically by philosophies as divergent as the poles. There was no longer any real co-operation or agreement between them, although the open break was not to come for several years. The Dalai had perfected a government of cruel tyranny, backed by the ardent warriors of the Young Tibetan party under the murderous leadership of the fierce Lung Shar. The Panchan no longer took any pains to conceal his wholehearted disapproval of this regime.

While the rift between the Grand Lamas of Tibet had been widening gradually, the lot of the Mongolian incarnation at Urga had not been a particularly happy one. His troubles dated back about four years, to the Russian collapse which followed the overthrow of the Tsarist regime.

My interest in the Mongolian situation was stimulated, even before I became personally acquainted with the Hutuketu, by my meeting Semienoff, Baroness Sternberg, and particularly André Sevier, a remarkable young man who had been in the British secret service in Russia and Siberia and who knew Mongolia better than did most Mongol princes.

Sevier was the son of French parents, but was born a Russian subject, while his father was serving as court physician to the Tsar. He spoke and wrote Russian perfectly, and he had an equal facility in English, German, French and Chinese. Starting the World War as a Russian naval officer, he had later been drafted by the British and had gone to Siberia as a British secret service agent in the Bolshevik ranks. He had been in Mongolia for a year and a half when I met him in Peking, and his knowledge of the country was fresh, specific and comprehensive. He had probed the Hutuketu's difficulties and could fill in the entire background of the Urgan incarnation's present exile in Peking.

I learned from Sevier that during the first three years of the War the Mongolians had prospered fantastically from their contracts to supply the Russian armies with beef and mutton,

wool, tallow and horseflesh. But with the rise of Bolshevism their boom days came to an end and their land threatened to become the arena of opposing armies. Just to the north of them, a succession of anti-Bolshevist generals sought to save Siberia from Communism, their efforts subsidized and directed by Britain and Japan. Kolchak, Semienoff and Ungern-Sternberg were the names on which London and Tokyo relied. But the lack of any co-operation between these free-lance Napoleons defeated all chance of success, and their flight before the Bolsheviks threw them on their own resources as scourges on unoffending neighbours of Siberia.

The Hutuketu, in Urga, could not avoid being drawn into the debacle. Ungern-Sternberg's fleeing forces descended upon Urga.

Sevier was in Urga when the hard-pressed general himself rode into the city. "I had been in Mongolia only a few months," he told me, "and I considered Urga one of the most desolate towns in the world. It was nothing more than a huddle of mud huts, grouped around the Hutuketu's palace, which is a sprawling structure in the Chinese temple style, surrounded by a high mud wall painted a bright lama yellow.

"The general came riding up to the gates with a bodyguard of Cossacks. We in the town at first thought it was a Bolshevik invasion, and the market place was in a panic. I myself was posing as a refugee from the Yenesei gold fields and I watched the arriving strangers from a rooftop near the palace.

"Their lathered horses and mudstained uniforms showed that they had been riding hard. They halted only a moment or two at the temple gates. Then, at a sharp command from their leader, the entire troop wheeled impatiently into the courtyard. This in itself was a sacrilegious procedure, and set them down instantly as either enemies or ignorant barbarians.

"Nevertheless, in the courtyard they were received ceremoniously by a group of palace officials and priests. After a brief parley, their leader was ushered inside the palace, and a number of the priests came out to spread the word around the town that the visitors were not Bolsheviks but powerful friends of Mongolia, claiming sanctuary."

Within a few days, the "powerful friends" had begun to usurp as much of the Hutuketu's temporal power as they could. The Baron von Ungern-Sternberg had an army encamped a day's march from Urga. The Hutuketu had no army except a few scattered Mongol cavalymen, unprepared for this emergency.

The Urgan incarnation, in fact, had no great objection to permitting the baron to organize the defence of Mongolia against Bolshevism. To this end he permitted the recruiting of Mongol cavalry to fill the gaps in the ranks of the Sternberg forces.

But in return he exacted a definite agreement that there was to be no interference with religion, and the baron gave evidence of his good intentions by himself embracing Lamaism and by causing a number of his staff to do the same. He publicly posted strict orders imposing death as the penalty for any disrespect to the religion or its ordained leaders.

But the Hutuketu was too wise to leave his private fortune and treasury where it might tempt the newcomer. Quietly, over a period of a few weeks, he transferred all his portable wealth to Peking, sending it out by caravan in the baggage of priests whose travels were directed from the palace. Thus it came about that several millions in silver, gold and jewels left Urga without showing on any list of exports, and arrived for safe keeping in certain reliable bank vaults in the Chinese capital.

"I can imagine the Hutuketu's chuckles as he completed this operation," said Sevier. "He's a cheerful sort of personage, as you'll find out if you run into him around Peking. A little too good-natured, perhaps, to deal with a character like Sternberg. He managed to safeguard his money, but he couldn't safeguard his country."

Sternberg was a Russian of German parentage and a member of the Baltic nobility. He had been a general in the Tsar's army, but his assignment to Siberia indicated that he had no great influence at court. It was only after the rise of the Bolsheviks, when he began operating independently, that his qualities of leadership became apparent. He ruled by fear, and there never was a military dictator who used the firing squad more ruthlessly to control his men. In his

HERO OF BON-GOMPA

(Illustration facing page 192)

Shia was a huge hulk of a man, eminent in prodigious feats of eating and drinking. He could outeat, outdrink and outbelch any monk from Tashilhunpo to Kumbum. Strong-lunged profanity, too, was one of his specialties. A quiet man, not easily aroused, but in the Battle of the Falling Parapets his ox-like strength was used to such good effect that he became the hero of a tale told far and wide by the wandering minstrels. "Then, one by one, he seized his foes and tossed them into space, first being very certain that he'd pushed in every face."

MONASTERY LIBRARY

(Illustration facing page 193)

On the shelves are seen complete sets of the Kanjur and Tanjur, 312 volumes altogether, each volume carefully wrapped in silk and pressed between two boards. These embrace the entire Lamaist scriptures and commentaries, which the monks spend their lives in memorizing. . . . On the broad counter are bronze images of Buddha, draped in bright silks. Below the images burn many yak-butter lamps in their bronze bowls. The central altar bears two lamps, an incense burner, a bowl of yellow rice and a plume of the sacred longevity grass. On the floor is a mat for obeisance before the altar, and a stool bearing a slotted box for pilgrims' coins. In the skylight are hanging various silk-curtained scroll paintings. Around the pillars are banners and religious texts, and hanging above the altar is a lantern in the form of a ceremonial umbrella.





defence—if defence be needed—it must be said that he had a hard crew to deal with; his army of desperate adventurers could have been ruled only by constant threat of death.

His fight against the Bolsheviks had been undertaken from motives of pure patriotism. It was only after he had been thoroughly whipped by the Red forces that he developed a new motive for a new crusade. The new motive was personal ambition and a dream of himself as the head of an empire in north-eastern Asia.

In the almost untapped man power of Mongolia he could see an army capable of sweeping him to the throne.

His first step was to organize Urga as his temporary capital and military base. With German thoroughness he started to rebuild the town. Streets which had never been anything but crooked, rutted gullies were straightened and paved. The mud walls of the Mongolian compounds were torn down, and acre after acre of single-storied adobe huts were replaced with wooden houses in the Russian style. Electric lights and telephones were installed, and a city of barracks fringed the outskirts.

Gradually all temporal power was taken away from the Hutuketu, but his place as spiritual ruler was carefully guarded, protected and fortified by the politic baron, who continued to be himself an impeccable, ostentatious Lamaist, attending the temple services and chanting his *Om mani padme hum* with a faithful clicking of rosary and prayer wheel.

The Hutuketu put the best possible face on the usurpation of his temporal power and had created a fairly satisfactory *modus vivendi* out of the early confusion, when unexpectedly the baron decided to make a military move against the Bolsheviks, who had been occasionally harassing the northern plains. Their little raids were of no great significance and never constituted even the slightest threat to Urga. But the baron decided to use them as an excuse for administering a sound trouncing to the Red army which had driven him out of Siberia. The forces at his command had been adequately reinforced with picked Mongol horsemen, and he felt that he was more than a match for his ancient enemy.

There was opposition to the baron's plan, not only among his own officers, but also from the Hutuketu and the latter's

Council of Princes. The lama, who had not been averse to Sternberg's army as a defensive bulwark, protested vigorously against its use as an offensive weapon. He pointed out the dangers of an attenuated line of communication into the enemy's country, the possibilities of treachery, the presence everywhere of Bolshevik spies and agents.

But the baron paid no attention to opposition. He went ahead with his plan and proceeded to march from Urga at the head of his troops. It was his last march. He chased the Red forces into their mountain fastnesses, and when he was completely lost, he was betrayed by some of his own officers, delivered to the enemy and shot at the hands of a Bolshevik firing squad.

Parts of his army found their way back into Mongolia, scattered squads of leaderless men closely pursued by victorious Bolsheviks. The whole country north and west of Urga became the scene of a pitiless man hunt. Both sides pillaged the nomad tent-villages. Refugees flocked into Urga, and their wild tales terrorized the city.

It was some time before the Hutuketu could find any means of meeting the confusion. He had to reassume the temporal authority, but here he was hampered by the civil machinery which the baron had set up. Before he could get control of it all, the invading Bolsheviks had entirely surrounded Urga and the whole countryside was overrun with detached bands of Reds and anti-Reds who massacred one another and the Mongol population with a complacent indifference.

The stopping of bloodshed became the Hutuketu's primary consideration. He decided the only way to restore order was to treat with the invaders, if he could find any leaders with real authority.

Dozens of the baron's officers, each leading a band of desperate guerillas, accused him of treachery when he finally arranged a peace conference with the Russians. The latter were polite, friendly and generous. They promised peace and order on the Hutuketu's own terms. The policy of Russia, they said, was autonomy for all its member states and neighbours.

They represented themselves as anxious to bolster up the incarnation's authority, both temporal and spiritual. As soon as the anti-Bolshevik detachments had been mopped up, they

would withdraw their military forces—except small policing units. Moreover, they would furnish educational, scientific and engineering help for the development of the country—agricultural experts to aid the plainsmen of the steppes in replenishing their depleted flocks and herds, teachers and books for the youth, road builders to create arteries for trade, and the machinery of a modern postal system.

The Hutuketu listened to their promises with some misgivings, but he had no choice. He could only hope that they would stick to their attractive programme.

They proceeded enthusiastically with the task of mopping up their enemies. The baron's old military barracks were now filled with Bolshevik soldiers. Bloodshed in the countryside increased, and the nomad tent-villages became "enemies" unless they contributed promptly their allotted quotas of butter, milk and meat. The Bolshevik "police" inaugurated a reign of terror among the uncomprehending nomads.

Meanwhile, in Urga, the Hutuketu rapidly lost again all vestiges of temporal power. And even his spiritual headship was ignored and challenged. The Bolsheviks soon changed his status to that of a state prisoner—communication with his followers was cut off, pilgrims were driven away from the temple, his own priests and councillors were persecuted and a system of keyhole peeping was installed in his palace.

Sevier was still in Urga, a refugee gold washer, when the Hutuketu, weary of the continuous strife that surrounded him, decided to take a "vacation" in Peking. His departure was approved by the Bolsheviks, who felt that their anti-religious crusade would be made simpler by his absence.

The incarnation took with him to Peking only a few of his priestly advisers and servants. Members of the Council of Princes were instructed to return to their banners, or tribes, and his spiritual power was delegated for the time being to the Anching Hutuketu, a lesser incarnation who presided over a monastery in the eastern part of Mongolia, far remote from Bolshevik influence.

The Urgan pontiff set no particular limits to the length of his "vacation" in Peking. He hoped that his absence would prove to the Bolsheviks the importance of his position and leadership, and that eventually they would invite him to return with all the prerogatives of his spiritual office. But

weeks stretched into months without any indication of a Bolshevik summons. The pontiff, with Oriental fatalism, waited patiently, using his great wealth to command for him the best that life offered in Peking, and this he found both comfortable and pleasant.

My first meeting with the Hutuketu was at a winter dinner dance in the Hotel des Wagon-lits, whose Chinese name is more appropriate—Hotel of the Six Nations. I had come down to dinner, with my wife, rather later than usual. We sat at a small table on the edge of the dance floor between two parties of Chinese who were already noisily approaching the main course, which was roast pheasant.

As we ate, our attention was repeatedly drawn to one of the adjoining tables, because of the Gargantuan laughter of one of the diners, a large portly man dressed in a Chinese long-coat of royal blue silk. His companions were the famous Ku Hu-ming, writer and philosopher, and a dainty Chinese lady who was wearing a few rare and beautiful pieces of jade, set in pearls and diamonds.

Their conversation appeared to be mainly a duel between Ku Hu-ming and the stranger in blue. The lady, of course, maintained a reserved silence, smiling faintly and impartially at the sallies of the two conviviais.

Ku Hu-ming was a famous conversationalist, whose thrusts were always sharp and to the point. Few people were a match for him; he usually silenced them promptly with his biting satire, and then carried on the table talk in a triumphant monologue.

But the blue-coated stranger thwarted Dr. Ku's customary technique by finding a humorous reply for every barbed shaft. Even the vitriolic doctor joined merrily in the laughter, enjoying the unusual situation of having his invincible arguments turned inside out and rendered grotesque.

As the three Chinese were finishing their dessert, consisting of the famous Peking persimmons, my old friend Major Eastwick approached their table and after an exchange of greetings sat down with them for coffee and cognac. Eastwick was an American banker, long resident in Peking. The party switched to English on his arrival, and Dr. Ku immediately gained an advantage over his portly companion, for Dr.

Ku's English was fluent and polished, while the other man spoke brokenly and with difficulty.

As soon as my wife and I were ready for coffee, Eastwick, after a whispered aside to Dr. Ku, came over to our table and asked us to join forces with him and his Chinese friends. We were introduced, and a waiter pulled our two tables together. The portly gentleman in the blue coat was "Prince Dilowa"—which meant nothing to me at the time—and the Chinese lady was the princess.

Eastwick promptly took my wife out on the dance floor, leaving me to carry on the conversation. There was no occasion for me to invite the princess to dance, as I had noticed that her feet were "lilies"—the Chinese term for feet which have been "bound" to make them tiny and pointed, and are therefore useless for dancing. Instead, I invited her to try one of my American cigarettes, which she accepted with a graceful bow and a soft-voiced "*hsieh-hsieh*" (thank you).

Dr. Ku, whom I had never met before but whose reputation as a satirist was well known to me, had been looking at me with an appraising eye. He had slanted his head curiously as I was introduced, and had half closed his eyes, concentrating his glance on a point midway between my forehead and chin. The corners of his mouth turned down cynically, and his lips moved a little, as if he were practising a tentative sentence. I noted his unusually long ears, wide forehead and lean neck. It was obvious that he was preparing to try me out with one of his customary tirades against foreigners.

"You are a newcomer at the American legation?" he asked politely. "Have you been here long enough to have solved all of China's problems?"

There was no answer I could make to his bland question without laying myself wide open. I sought to evade the issue by remarking mildly that I still regarded myself as merely a visitor, like a tourist seeing the sights. That afternoon, I informed him, I had been at the Lamaist temple on the Hatamen Road, which I had found very interesting.

"What—you find the Lamas interesting?" he inquired, with an oblique smile at Prince Dilowa, who broke into a hilarious laugh. I was puzzled and a little irritated at the laugh, seeing nothing humorous in the doctor's question.

I answered it by saying defensively that I had spent most of my life in Northern India and had always been interested in Tibet and Lamaism.

This was exactly what the doctor was waiting for. I had exposed a vulnerable flank, and he drew up closer to the table in anticipation of a fine chance to display his talent.

"Well, if you are a student of Lamaism, you have certainly come to the right table," he said, half to me and half to his blue-coated companion, who was still shaking with an unexplained mirth. "I think that the prince and I may very well claim, with all due modesty, to be experts in that field. Is it not so, Prince?"

The prince, with a great effort, restrained his desire to guffaw long enough to reply with a vigorous nod of the head, and a "yes-s-s" which had about fifteen "s's."

I looked at him a little more closely, and it suddenly dawned on me that he was probably not a Chinese. There was a little too much thickness of lip, a little too much prominence of cheekbone and his complexion was slightly too swarthy. The free sweep of his arm, as he drained his repeated cognacs, was somehow different. He was from the north, perhaps Manchurian or Mongolian. I had noticed his odd shoes, whose thick white felt soles were an interesting variation from those of the ordinary slipper worn by Chinese gentlemen on full-dress occasions.

"The prince, perhaps, is of the Lamaist faith?" I ventured, quite proud of myself.

While the prince suddenly came near to choking with a new attack of laughter, Dr. Ku gravely asked me, almost as if he were changing the subject:

"Do you, by any chance, happen to know what a Hutuketu is?"

I told him that I was quite familiar with the composition of the trinity of incarnations, although of course my studies in India had dealt more with the Panchan and Dalai Lamas than with the third member of the triple godhead.

"How interesting!" commented the keen-faced old gentleman, and added, with an air of sarcastic triumph, "then this evening you will remedy the deficiencies of your Indian training, for you are now sitting at table with the Urgan Hutuketu!"

He waved his hand in an exaggerated gesture toward his

portly companion, and looked at me exactly as if he were a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat.

I can't remember very much of Dr. Ku Hu-ming's long monologue which followed. It was a comparison of the philosophies of the East and the West, formulated in such a way as to make the West appear sophomoric, although the speaker also administered frequent sly thrusts at the primitive beliefs of Lamaism. Dr. Ku began by adroitly imagining himself in my position—young, unsophisticated and impressionable, or at least so he choose to characterize me, in a polite but somehow unflattering way. His barbs were all two-edged, with one side aimed at the bland Prince Dilowa and the other at me.

It was no doubt brilliant, but it was pretty largely wasted on me. I really heard little of it, because my mind was so completely occupied with the mere fact of an incarnation's presence.

Actually, I was a bit stunned by the immediate difficulty of reconciling the two incompatible ideas of a member of the trinity—a god in human form—and this Falstaffian merry-maker.

Dr. Ku seemed a little annoyed at my inattention. He leaned toward me and launched still more pointed sallies, his thin face wrinkling oddly around the corners of his eyes and in the centre of his forehead, as if he were a college professor trying to hammer a point into the head of a particularly brainless student. He brought his long thin fingers into the argument, punctuating his remarks with forcible pressure upon little round pellets of bread which he had saved from his dinner rolls.

But my mind was on other matters. I was making a great mental effort, trying to get used to a Grand Lama who ate pheasant and persimmons, who gulped cognac and coffee, who laughed uproariously, who sat in the company of women.

In the company of women? It suddenly occurred to me that the quiet little Chinese lady had been introduced as his wife. How could an incarnation have a wife? I was completely bewildered, and began to find difficulty in keeping myself from staring rudely at both the prince and his lady.

My wife, returning from the dance floor with Major Eastwick, must have thought I had taken too much cognac. I was so abstracted and dull. For the rest of the evening I sat a little apart, trying to think but unable to get anywhere with it. My wife sat down beside the princess, and they seemed to get along very well.

After a short time, Dr. Ku gave me up as a hopeless task and rose from his chair with a request that he be excused. The prince and princess had a nightcap with us, and left soon afterward, when the table boy announced their car.

I pleaded fatigue and went upstairs to bed. For the next few weeks I made it my business to find out all I could about the Mongolian incarnation, and to try to fit him into my previous conceptions of Lamaism.

The princess, I learned, was a well-born Chinese woman, whom he had married several years previously. They had a son, of whom the prince was inordinately proud.

As for the rules of celibacy in the Lamaist code, the prince frankly maintained that as god in human form he had the obvious right to make his own rules. The fact that he was breaking an ancient precedent did not bother him.

I met the Hutuketu occasionally at the hotel and elsewhere, and gradually accustomed myself to the ideas which had seemed so strange and incongruous. Indeed, I grew to like him, and always found him pleasant company. Two or three times I drew him into discussion of his religious office. Despite his invariably offhand attitude, he had a definite philosophy, based on a deep conviction—amounting to a complete assurance—that he was really the incarnation of the deified Taranatha-lama.

He talked about years as if they were minutes, referring to things that happened in his tenth or fifteenth incarnation and comparing those ancient times with present-day happenings. This was done with evident sincerity, precisely as if he had been present on the occasions referred to, perhaps hundreds of years before.

My conversations with the pontiff were handicapped considerably by the fact that his English was fragmentary, and my Chinese was not yet sufficiently fluent to enable me to go into the abstrusities of Lamaism. However, we managed to

get along pretty well, assisted by Chinese and foreign friends who always surrounded him.

The Hutuketu was, I am sure, an "original." There had never been a Grand Lama exactly like him, nor was there likely to be another. Of course, there were basic racial differences between him and the two Tibetan pontiffs which accounted for some of his characteristics. He was a Mongol, they were Tibetan; and the distinction is fundamental. He was a prince of aristocratic birth, they were both of obscure peasant parentage.

The Mongol is a nomad, by virtue of thousands of years of life on the broad steppes. His mode of life is not settled or static; even a city like Urga is just a trading centre of a few thousand souls, and its population comes and goes with the seasons, almost as if it were no more than any other spot on the steppes. The typical Mongol is a cattle herder, who counts his wealth in sheep and ponies; he hates agriculture as much as he hates village life; he has no use for money. His political philosophy consists of nothing more elaborate than a loose tribal allegiance to his banner. His religion he leaves to the monks—and the more powerful monks hire lesser monks to say their prayers for them.

Applied to the Hutuketu, all these Mongolian characteristics meant that his good nature, his fondness for food, his indifference to politics and his religious sublimations were normal. He left Urga when the complications of international intrigue grew irksome; in Peking, he was satisfied to live at ease, delegating his Urgan responsibilities to subordinates. What would come, would come.

He saw no incongruity in his life in Peking. Nor did his followers, either in Mongolia, or in Peking, or in Tibet. In a primitive civilization like that of Mongolia, matters of religion are left entirely to the priests, whose office it is to defeat the demons and devils by chants, litanies and spells. When good fortune comes, it is because the priests have driven off the powers of evil. When disaster befalls, it is plain that there is only another battalion of demons for the priests to wrestle with. The supreme pontiff, God incarnate, is far removed from the common people and his personal conduct is his own affair.

As a matter of fact, there was plenty of justification in religion for the Hutuketu's partiality to a well-laden table,

He had borrowed from the Chinese the belief that a man's heart is in his stomach, and that here is the physical seat of the soul. He patterned his life according to the teachings of Ta Tu-tze, the Laughing God of Happiness, whose name means "Big Stomach" and whose gilded image is seen in thousands of temples from Heijo to Kwangchow-Wan.

CHAPTER TWO

ANTITHESIS AND CONTRAST

Eat your rice and be a clod,
Drink your rice and be a god.

Rice isn't bad to eat,
'Tis better far to drink,
It lightens heavy feet,
It helps a man to think.

Eat your rice and be a peasant,
Drink your rice and find life pleasant.

What is a wise man? One I knew
Once said in words concise:
A wise man is a fellow who
Knows what to do with rice.

—*Lin Fa-den's Poems on Rice Wine*

WHEN I arrived in China, I had a smattering of Chinese words and phrases, from my contact with comrades at Wooster and with the labour battalions in France. I thought it would be very easy for me to go on from this beginning to a complete fluency. But I was wrong. It takes a Chinese forty years to learn his language well enough to qualify for the Han Ling Academy; it takes him fifteen years to prepare for the ordinary civil service examinations. How can a foreigner hope to achieve even a reasonable facility in a few months?

Nevertheless, I tried. My first teacher was a pedagogue from the Language School at Peking, which is maintained by the diplomatic corps, the missions and the large foreign commercial houses. He came to my hotel every afternoon for an hour, and I kept on faithfully with him for a year. The only name he had, so far as I ever knew, was "Shen Shung"—a complimentary title for "teacher," although literally it means "first-born."

Shen Shung was a little man, shabbily dressed in a long-gown

of blue denim. He had a round and pock-marked face, with a slight cast in one eye which gave his perpetual smile a "double-barrelled" look. His thin hands were never clean, but they were incredibly dramatic, being constantly used for the purposes of pantomime, to fill in the void created by his lack of any single word of English or any other language except his own.

He prepared himself every day for his professional duties with a lunch of garlic stew, washed down with raw rice spirits. This gave him a distinctive odour, unpleasant to Western nostrils, and requiring the opening of all available windows regardless of the weather.

His method of teaching was to point to various objects and then to enunciate clearly their Chinese names. I repeated the words after him, many times, until he was satisfied. I soon found that there were, strictly speaking, neither nouns, verbs nor adjectives in the language.

After a few lessons devoted to creating a vocabulary, we moved on to phrases and combinations of words. There was no textbook, because a textbook requires the ability to recognize Chinese characters, an accomplishment which itself needs many years of study, for there are 50,000 different characters.

While Chinese is rich in idiom, it lacks syntax in our sense. It has no moods, voices or tenses. It even lacks a plural for the commonest noun. So it becomes a memory test, mainly, in the learning of a vocabulary.

But there's a catch even in that simple statement of the matter. The entire language is made up of words of one syllable—50,000 of them. But there are not 50,000 one-syllable sounds. For which reason many of the one-syllable sounds must be used over and over again.

Therefore, in addition to a vocabulary, one must know the "tones" that go with it. When one learns to speak Chinese, he must in reality learn to "sing" it.

In Mandarin, the official language of China, there are four distinct "tones" used in speaking. The first one is a rising inflection from start to finish. The second is on a dead level throughout. The third starts on ordinary voice level, drops sharply and ends on a distinctly rising inflection. The fourth tone simply drops.

Thus, if the word *chien* is uttered, it depends entirely on

tone as to whether the speaker means thousand, money, first or in front of.

This use of tone handicaps the Chinese considerably in at least one respect. It makes impossible the use of a rising inflection at the end of a sentence to indicate a question. For instance, one can say in English, "Oh, yes?" and the one to whom he speaks will know that he is asking a question, not making an affirmation. But a Chinese cannot do this without changing the meaning of his last word. He therefore has invented a little word, *ma*, which means nothing, but which can be inserted almost anywhere in a sentence to indicate that a question is being asked.

After I had spent a year with Shen Shung, I spoke enough Chinese to be able to shop, bargain for a rickshaw, ask my way about the city, chat with the priests in the roadside temples, and even to know approximately what was going on in my own servants' quarters.

It was time to graduate from Shen Shung's limited knowledge to a new teacher who could begin to initiate me into the refinements of the language, and at the same time could coach me in manners and customs, in the etiquette of polite speech and in the higher conventions which are so important a part of Chinese conversation.

My new teacher went by the name of Mr. Bamboo, but I knew this was not his real name, which he was hiding for political reasons. He was the son of a prominent official under the fallen Empire and had been mixed up in high intrigue for fifteen years. It was partly because of his intimate knowledge of Chinese politics that I employed him, because I wanted to learn all I could about these matters.

He was an idealist, and a gentleman by breeding, intention and deed. Whatever his political heresies may have been, he was still an old-fashioned Chinese scholar, whose knowledge of language, history and current events was profound. He came to me each morning at eight o'clock, and we conversed together, on every conceivable subject, for an hour. So far as vocabulary and language were concerned, I mainly sought to develop fluency and the ability to "think" in Chinese. Ordinarily, we would open our lesson with the current news of the day, and from this go on into geography, politics, history or any other subject that interested us. He would

bring with him a copy of a Chinese newspaper, and give me a digest of news and editorial opinion. I would stop him whenever he used an unfamiliar word or phrase, make sure that I had the meaning, and then use it myself to clinch it in my memory. After we had finished with the news, we would talk back and forth on whatever topic we chose.

The intricacies of learning to speak good colloquial Mandarin are considerable. There are countless conventions, formalisms and classicisms to be observed.

One of the commonest conventions is the familiar one of high flattery and excessive modesty in all forms of address. Mr. Bamboo, in speaking to me, would always refer to my "exalted" personality, and to himself as a base and unworthy individual. I, in replying, must adopt precisely the opposite attitude.

This elaborate and highly artificial convention I learned to carry through all my conversations with Chinese friends and acquaintances. The precise degree of flattery and self-debasement varied with each relationship. On meeting a Chinese merchant or official, my ear must pick up from his opening sentences the correct measure.

As for the formalisms of the language, the principal one is the use of antithesis. Every sentence must be rounded and balanced, if one wishes to speak with elegance. For instance, if you want to say, "Which of these two horses is the better one?" the correct Chinese version is, "This horse good; that horse good; good not good?" This method of balancing words and phrases must be applied, no matter what the difficulty, to every thought to be expressed. If you desire to call a Chinese friend's attention to a passing automobile, you should not say, "Look at that car!" you must say, "That car — see not see?" The required balance is supplied by use of the verb and its negative.

Moreover, there must be the same balance and antithesis between your questions and your companion's answers. In a language that is mainly question and answer, you must assist the required equilibrium by giving an answer the same values as those of the preceding question. When you are asked, "What is your honourable name?" the reply must be "My ignominious name is —." When you are asked, "What is your exalted country?" the reply must balance with "My insignificant country is —." When you are asked,

"How is your beautiful and precious wife?" the reply must be "My ugly and unworthy wife is flourishing."

In regard to classicisms, the elegant Chinese speaker lards his sentences plentifully with allusions to the ancient philosophers and quotations from the literature of the past. When a Chinese asks me my name, I reply by giving him the one-syllable word "*An*"—which is as close to the first syllable of "Enders" as the limited number of Chinese patronymics permits. To make myself clear, then, I must buttress my reply with a reference to some classical work in which the name "*An*" appears. Accordingly I say, "The *An* of Ping An," the latter two words being the beginning of a well-known quotation. It is as if, in English, one said, "My name is Curfew—as in 'Curfew shall not ring to-night.'"

Classicisms are the subtleties of polite conversation. If a man wishes to say that he has no money, he will perhaps give you the following phrase: "My clothes are of cotton and winter is coming on." It is the opening of an ancient fable about a bankrupt.

The conventional phrases of greeting in Chinese are examples of similar formalism, with their roots in antiquity. Instead of "How do you do?" the Chinese phrase is "Have you eaten rice?" In the background of this phrase is the fact that China has always been a poor and over-populated country, where semi-starvation was the rule, and where a polite inquiry about a man's health was less important than a question as to whether he had eaten.

Another common word of greeting is the single word "Early?" Mr. Bamboo explained that this might mean either "Have you had your early meal?" or "Your work is so hard that you have to begin it very early?" The latter is regarded as a flattering thing to say to anyone at any hour of the day or evening.

The guest at dinner, if he desires to be polite, never fails to ask his host how much the dinner cost. If the menu is nothing more than rice, fish and greens, a thoughtful guest must still ask the question, with the flattering implication that his host must surely have spent an enormous sum in providing such delicious food. And the guest must reinforce his flattery about the meal by eating it as noisily as possible and by belching generously afterwards.

A Chinese gentleman always likes to be asked how old he

YAK CARAVAN AT A FORD

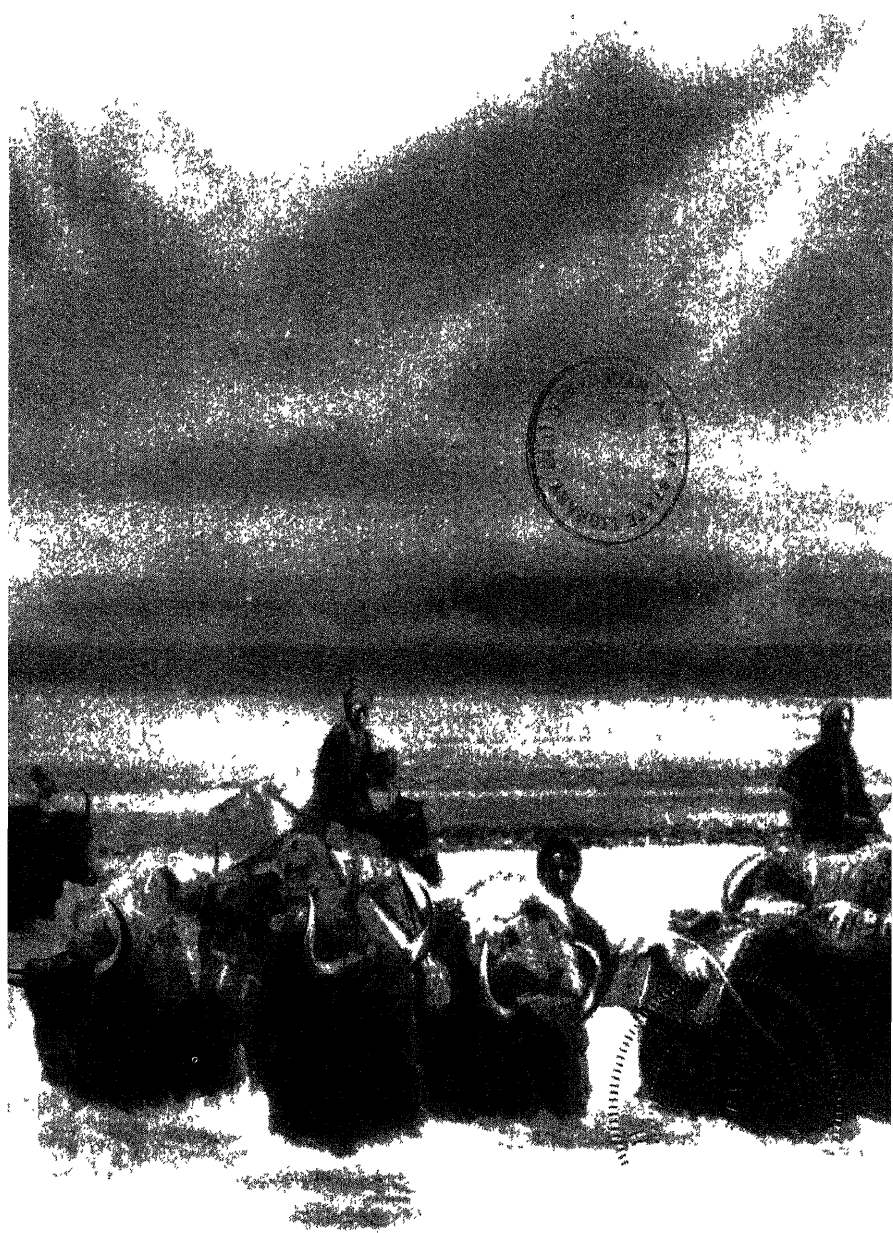
(Illustration facing page 208)

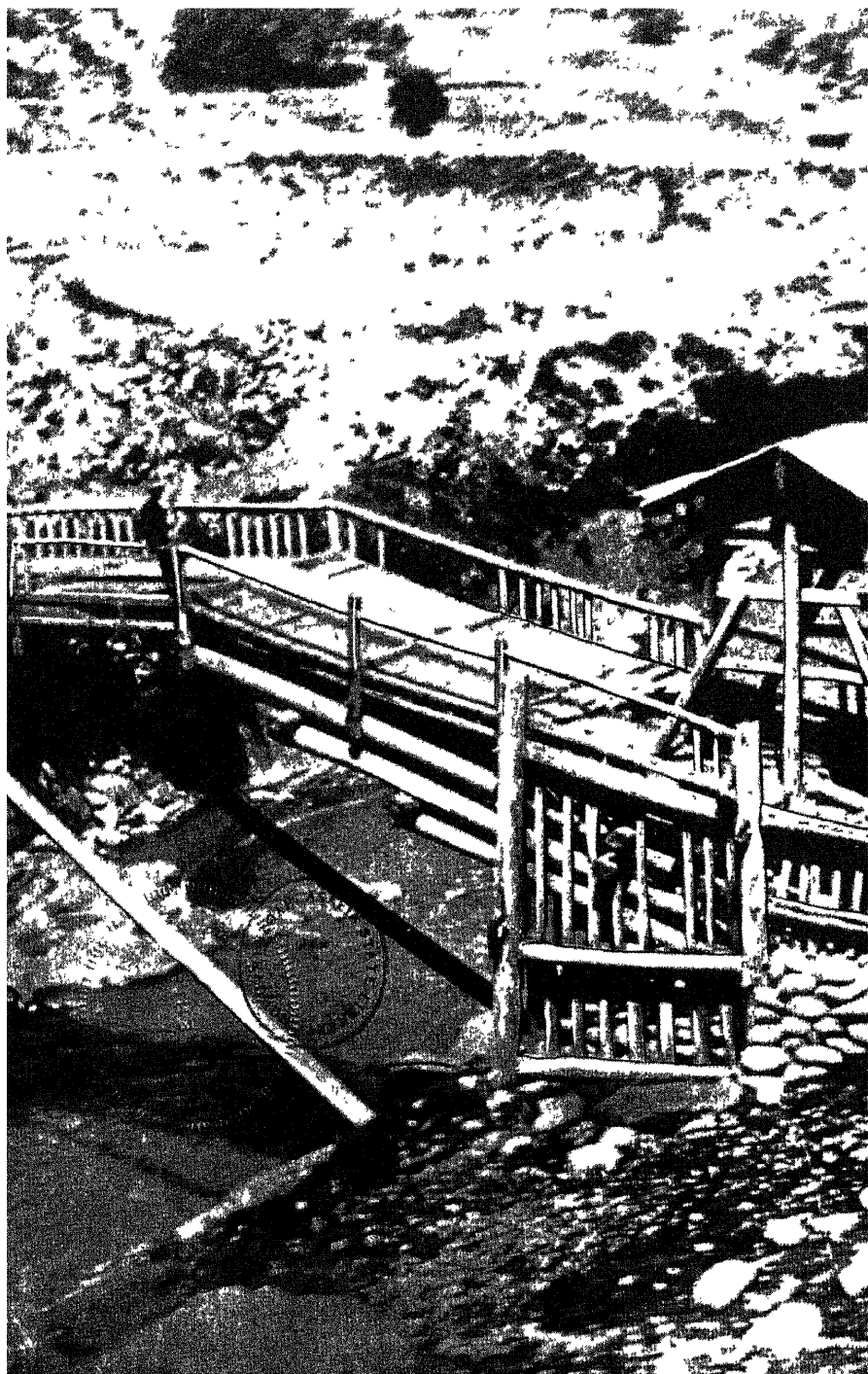
The yak is the Tibetan beast of burden, used almost exclusively by the natives wherever altitudes exceed 8000 feet. In appearance it resembles the American bison or buffalo, although it is shorter in stature, heavier in the hindquarters and has thicker, longer and silkier wool, covering its whole body. It is more deliberate and peaceful in its movements than the buffalo, but has a more formidable appearance owing to the heavy "feathers" of long hair on its dewlap and fetlocks. As a beast of burden it has certain definite merits in a high and mountainous country. It is easily domesticated; it carries a heavy load; it is absolutely sure-footed; it endures easily the hardships of cold, wind and weather; it can find its own forage in the bleakest country. For the Tibetans, it has the additional merit of providing butter, wool, leather, meat and even building material—the latter in the universal use of yak bones and horns as a revetment for walls of mud houses.

BRIDGE WITHOUT NAILS OR RIVETS

(Illustration facing page 209)

Bridge construction is an ancient art among the Tibetans. Their cable bridges, made of bamboo and cane fibre, are famous. But these are used only for crossing deep chasms or for bridges above the timber line, where wood is unobtainable. In the lower valleys wooden bridges are built according to ingenious engineering patterns handed down from prehistoric times. Because iron is scarce, the use of nails and rivets is unknown. The construction is semi-cantilever, with the overhanging units transferring the stresses to a rock anchor at each side. . . . The roofed-over entrance to the bridge is not for the protection of human beings, but is a luxury touch provided for "benign spirits" who may wish to cross the bridge in times of bad weather. Upkeep of the bridges is usually in the hands of the nearest monastery.





is, how many sons he has and how much he paid for every article of wearing apparel, furniture and adornment. He replies with polite exaggerations and similarly flattering questions about yourself.

Mr. Bamboo taught me not only language, but also the manners and etiquette of everyday life—the conventions of greeting, eating, leave-taking; the etiquette of calls, interviews and occasions; the formalities of gifts, tips and commissions.

I learned how to use chopsticks expertly, how to drop my chicken bones under my chair at meals, how to husk my watermelon seeds with my teeth, how to use soya sauce and other flavourings, how to sip my soup with exactly the right volume of sound, how to make a pretence of eating heartily without over-burdening the stomach halfway through a twenty-five-course meal.

I learned the various gradations of bowing and handshaking to be used in meeting people of various stations. Actual handshaking is a foreign custom, which is used only in the cities where foreign influence has become important. The old-fashioned greeting consists of a doubling of the fists against the chest, accompanied by a deep bow. A Chinese gentleman will remove his glasses when he does this, but he leaves his hat on his head.

I learned that in offering my card to anyone, I must hold it out with both hands. To use only one hand would stamp me as an ignoramus. If the man to whom I offered it should take it with only one hand, he would be deliberately insulting me.

When calling at a Chinese house or place of business, I would be offered a cup of tea, which I must sip slowly as the conversation proceeded. When my host signalled the servant to bring me a second cup, I would know that it was time for me to go. Therefore, I would drink the second cup more quickly and leave as soon as it was finished.

The practice of exchanging gifts has a complicated routine of etiquette all its own. It is correct to carry a gift of food to a house where you have been invited for dinner. Your courtesy is reciprocated the next day by your host, and the servant who brings your host's gift to you should receive a tip amounting to one-tenth the value of the present. Gifts

are exchanged at New Year and many other occasions. Gifts at weddings, births and funerals should be in cash, and there should be a cash tip to the messenger who brings you the news. Whenever you eat in a Chinese home, you must tip the servants, the amount being based on your station in life. A prominent Chinese gentleman, invited out to dinner, will often leave tips amounting to twenty or thirty dollars.

Lessons in etiquette and procedure were, of course, a minor part of my daily labours with Mr. Bamboo. Mainly our studies dealt with current events and all the background matters which I needed. I tried to compare China with India, and to adjust the idea of the Orient which I had gained in India to the Chinese environment.

In many small things the two countries were similar. The sounds, sights and smells were much alike. The gestures and grimaces in conversation, the activities of the peasants in their huts and around their cooking fires, the babies astraddle their mothers' hips, the chattering of the women in the court-yards, the drudgery of burden bearers, the intensive and laborious agriculture—these were the same in China and India. But in China the orderliness of Hindustan was missing.

The main difference, it seemed to me, was that the British were in India, governing that vast country with system and efficiency. It was nearly ten years before a new Nanking government began to plan for something of the same kind in China. At the time I came to Peking, the comparison between India and China was a comparison between order and chaos.

Where the British Raj administered forty states and provinces, with a population of 350,000,000, in such a way that law and order prevailed, the Chinese rule was one in which governors and officials were themselves the greatest criminals. In India, the government tried to meet the four great scourges of the Orient: famine, flood, disease, political exploitation of the people. In China, government did almost nothing to alleviate any of these evils. Food for famine relief was taxed and confiscated by rapacious provincial officials; flood sufferers were mercilessly enslaved by corrupt viceroys; peasants in the grip of epidemics were driven out of the villages to die; tax-gathering was sublet to the highest bidder and became merely licensed banditry.

The Peking Government had no control over the provincial

governors, and its treasury was empty. The successive presidents of the new Republic used their office mainly for the advantages it gave them in a mad scramble for personal gain. They played the foreign powers against one another with a perfected cynicism, seeking money for their own pockets. They sold wireless monopolies simultaneously to both Japan and the United States; they exploited railway concessions in a similar way. They tried to get their hands on the foreign-run customs, pledged against old loans; failing that, they laid new taxation of the most fantastic and oppressive character. City octroi duties, collected at the gates of Peking, were increased to the point where a man who took a bicycle out on the road for a day's outing must pay an export tax in the morning and an import tax when he returned in the evening. There were special "famine" surcharges on all mail, telegrams and commercial paper; when these surcharges seemed to yield an easy revenue, they were multiplied by additional imposts known as "flood" taxes and "plague" taxes.

Out of it all, the Government raked together enough revenue to meet the annual pension of \$3,000,000 which had been voted to the boy Emperor, Pu-yi. But the money didn't go to Pu-yi—it was diverted *en route*, and the Emperor eventually had to seek bed and board with an old retainer in Tientsin.

I was struck with the apathy of the common people toward all this misrule. In India there was always a legion of small critics of the British Raj, and this formed a public opinion to which the Government was very sensitive. In Peking there was no criticism; whatever the people thought of their tyrants, they kept their opinions to themselves, often maddeningly supine in the face of evils which a little talk might have corrected.

Yet the Peking people were individualists, much more than the plainsmen of India. They were stubborn, tenacious and stoic. They had an innate conviction that the present state of affairs, whatever it might be, was merely temporary, and that they needed only to wait for the turn of the wheel. They saw no point in actively opposing a condition which was going to change anyway.

But still more important was the fact that they had no

objection, in principle, to tyranny. Their only objection was that they themselves, as individuals, were not the tyrants.

They were gamblers, with a gambler's view of life and fortune. Each one of them believed that he himself, by some twist of fate, might come to a place of great power. And when he did, he planned to use that power selfishly, for his own enrichment.

Time and again, in those first troubled republican days in China, the common man's dream had come true. Tsao Kun was a wheelbarrow coolie who walked through the streets of Peking peddling cigarettes and knick-knacks. There came a local rebellion in an outlying district, and Tsao Kun happened to pick the winner in advance. He raised a squad of eighteen fellow coolies and joined the rebels. When his side won, and Peking negotiated peace with the local leaders, he made his original squad the nucleus of a permanent group of armed men, becoming first a local general and then a provincial war lord. Amassing a war chest by loot and blackmail, he suddenly rose into national prominence when a new presidential election was ordered. He moved his men into Peking, where the members of parliament were preparing to ballot, and brazenly announced that he would give \$5000 in cash for every vote cast as he directed. There was a great scandal, but he won control. And a few days later he instructed the electors to cast the ballots for himself, Tsao Kun, ex-wheelbarrow coolie. Early one bitter autumn morning—dressed in British "tails" and white tie, with cotton padding stuffed under his boiled shirt for warmth—he became President of China, with the whole diplomatic corps looking on.

Chang Tso-lin, the bandit war lord of Mukden, was another self-made man among the rulers of the New China. And a third example was the famous Feng Yu-hsiang, the "Christian general" who rose from provincial obscurity to the post of minister of war.

As I began to look into the background of the prominent figures who were headliners in my daily news talks with Mr. Bamboo, I was astounded at the number of able, if unscrupulous, leaders who had come from the common people. Many of them were without even the ability to read and write with ease. Frequently a newly enthroned war lord or provincial governor would have to send for scribes to fix up a good

genealogy for him, so that he would have proper standing in polite assemblies.

I wondered why none of these leaders seemed to have any of the devotion to country that had been the actuating motive behind the great names of Western statecraft—men like Washington, Disraeli and Bismarck. Why, in China, did there seem to be nothing in the minds of those who rose to power except an insatiable cupidity?

Mr. Bamboo gave me at least a partial answer by describing the old governmental system for selecting public servants. It was a civil service routine, based on examinations held annually. The assumption was that the man who was letter-perfect in the Chinese classics, who could pen a formalized essay, dash off a conventional poem and elaborate a philosophical allusion, was a man who could equally well govern a province, build a bridge or command an army. Even the lower examinations required years of study and preparation, and ordinary Chinese families could not afford to provide this schooling for even a single son.

But it frequently occurred that all the branches of a family would pool their resources in order to give one bright boy a chance. The life savings of a hundred people would be invested in him, and when he arrived at the end of fifteen to twenty-five years of study and won his first government job, he was expected to support all his sponsors and their dependents for the rest of their lives. His salary would be nominal only, but he would control the appointment of a few minor posts, which would go to a dozen or so of his family group. For the others he must make provision in cash, by means of unofficial levies which were roughly termed "squeeze."

This was the origin of the system of loot linked in the Chinese mind with office-holding. Condoned for centuries it had a hold that could not quickly be loosened. There was a tremendous inertia in a country like China, where less than five per cent of the population was literate. The complete change-over from a monarchy to a republic could not be achieved in a day.

Occasionally, in my discussions with Mr. Bamboo, the news of the day would turn our attention directly toward Tibet. There were vague dispatches about banditry on the border, proposed explorations, accounts of gold rushes in the Koko Nor area, visits of lesser incarnations to Chinese shrines,

rumours of political intrigue at Lhasa. Hardly ever did the news have any definite bearing on the problems of the Panchan and Dalai Lamas. Mr. Bamboo, who was a close friend of abbot of the Yellow Temple of Lamaism in Peking, was convinced that the Panchan had permanently retired from any active part in the temporal councils of Tibet, and that the Dalai, as the undisputed head of the country, was planning to declare complete independence of China. This, we were sure, would lead to punitive measures from Peking as soon as a strong central government came into existence—which, as I saw it, could only result in another period of exile in India for the two incarnations.

CHAPTER THREE

RIOT IN THE TEMPLE

I smile at you, you smile at me,
No harm in smiling. Smiles are free.
But you from Yunnan know full well
My mind is praying you to hell.
Your thoughts of me approximate
My thoughts of you : a natural hate.
For Yunnanites and Shantung men
Each other's wares may seek but when
The trading's done the smiles are through
And you loathe me and I loathe you.

—*Song of the Shantung Trader*

I HAD left the government service and gone into business in Shanghai when news came that the Panchan Lama was leaving Tibet for a voluntary exile in China. The reason for his flight was for a long time obscure, but eventually it developed that he felt it was the only way to save his country from a civil war.

Nowhere else in the world could the things have happened which took place in China during the years that followed, while the Panchan's period of exile gradually lengthened and his field of activity gradually extended.

Nowhere else, certainly, could events have conspired to put me, an obscure American, into a position of trust and confidence as the official adviser and counsellor of the theocratic head of an Oriental faith with 10,000,000 followers, as a member of the Tibetan peerage, and the only foreigner in history to hold the Panchan's "Passport to Heaven."

It all came about without much deliberate planning on my part. Only my background of interest in Tibet led me along the road. Around me was a chaos extending without seeming purpose toward a climax which is yet to come—and on which will perchance depend the future of the Orient.

In retrospect, those bewildering years seem like a period spent in an Oriental palace of illusions. Throughout my stay

in China, it was the unbelievable that seemed most plausible. And the truth was always hidden behind a meaningless blur of phantoms—religious, political and social.

I am tempted to preface my account of this period with some apologies. If my reader finds me occasionally obscure, ambiguous or enigmatic, I can only plead that the things that happened were often riddles—sometimes the riddles of confusion, sometimes of concealment. Often, perhaps, they were merely the whimsical and unaccountable result of the clash of underlying forces—political, religious and racial—as dynamic as the eruptions of nature which threw the Himalayan Mountains five miles above the level of the sea.

The threat of civil war, which was the reason for the Panchan's flight from Tibet, arose out of the loyalty of two-thirds of the population to him, their spiritual head. They saw him being steadily driven into eclipse by the irreligious followers of Lung Shar at Lhasa. The Dalai Lama was completely under the thumb of Lung Shar and his army of Young Tibetans, whose plan was to turn Tibet from a theocracy into a militarist state bent on power and conquest.

The Panchan's attitude of passive resistance could be maintained no longer. His followers were preparing to rise in defence of their religion and to overthrow the oppressive rule of Lung Shar. The Panchan continued to preach against bloodshed, but he could no longer ignore the call to leadership in a holy war.

He realized that without his leadership there could be no actual war. Therefore, his retirement from Tibet, for the time being, would postpone a course of events in which he could see no good purpose.

But there was more than a mere negative policy in his visit to China. He had also a positive end in view. To his thinking many of the evils in the Tibetan political picture were due to China's neglect of her responsibilities as suzerain of the Lamaist countries. For several years the Chinese viceroys in Tibet had practically ceased to function, both because of the belligerent attitude of the Young Tibetans and because of the lack of support from Peking.

The Panchan felt that if capable and vigorous viceroys were sent to Lhasa by China, the objectionable features of the rule

of the headstrong Dalai and his lieutenant, Lung Shar, would be curbed and restrained.

The purpose of the Panchan's visit to Peking, therefore, was to lay this situation before the Chinese government, and to show to that government the necessity of taking its Tibetan provinces more seriously in order to avoid rebellion and oppression.

To finance his visit to China, the Panchan turned a practical eye on his treasury in Tashilhunpo. Here were vast stores of gold dust and musk. But no great amount of ready cash.

The trip to China must be made in regal style. A retinue of two hundred or more must be royally attired, fed and maintained. Whether the stay in China was three months or three years, the minimum expense would be more than a million dollars. The maximum might be several times that amount.

However, the treasury in Tashilhunpo must not be entirely emptied. Ample reserves must be left behind to provide for every possible contingency. The income of the palace would be considerably cut during his absence, because much of the revenue was from contributions by visitors who came to see personally the mighty head of their religion—contributions made in return for "longevity scarves," prayers and blessings, which were important only when they came direct from the pontiff himself.

Whatever funds the Panchan required in China must be taken out with him. It would not be safe to rely on sending back to Tashilhunpo for more when needed. The Dalai could easily find a way of preventing such appeals from being effective.

Weighing all the pros and cons, the Panchan directed his chamberlain to load about \$2,000,000 worth of gold and musk, to be carried on fifty pack mules and ponies in his caravan. Still the question of ready cash was unsolved.

His route to Peking was via Lhasa, Chamdo, Jyekundo and Koko Nor, into the Chinese border city of Lanchowfu. The distance across Tibet, to the frontier of China, was about a thousand miles. The Panchan's colourful cavalcade followed the ancient trail of the tea caravans for 300 miles, then turned north across rougher country to the upper Peking road.

Throughout his Tibetan journey he was preceded by an advance guard of fifteen mounted priests and chamberlains,

who rode a day's march ahead to make all the arrangements for nightly stop-overs in important monasteries along the road.

The main body moved slowly and ceremoniously. A day's march varied from seven to fourteen miles. The Panchan Lama was invariably at the head of the procession, surrounded by tonsured priests with prayer wheels, and hooded monks carrying the sacred yellow umbrellas. In level country, the pontiff walked; when the going was rough, he mounted his shaggy Koko Nor pony. In either case his head was protected by a yellow silk canopy.

He dressed, like his priests, in a robe of burgundy-coloured yak wool. His feet were sturdily clad in knee-high felt boots, with soles of inch-thick felt, comfortable and stone-proof on the rough trail.

At a respectful distance behind the pontiff came a straggling line of priests, acolytes and servants, marching in single file with the pack animals carrying food, clothing, religious equipment and other baggage. In the centre of this group were the animals which carried the incarnation's treasury of gold and musk. Each of these fifty mules bore about \$40,000 worth of cargo, and a group of picked men guarded them and kept them together.

Bringing up the rear were the clerks, secretaries and accountants, followed by butchers and scullions. Behind them came a detachment of local soldiers under the command of district officials.

But for many miles farther back stretched a line of pilgrims, travellers and seekers after salvation. These pious camp followers attached themselves to the cavalcade in hundreds, some marching only a few miles, others for several days.

At each Tibetan town, village or trail-side monastery, the procession would stop while the Panchan Lama blessed the people and conducted a service of solemn benediction in the temple. At every such centre, too, there would be crowds of pilgrims from the surrounding country; often these crowds had been waiting several days for his arrival.

The Panchan's journey, then, was more like a triumphal procession than a march into exile. In colour and setting it resembled a pageant of the Middle Ages. Sturdy brown Koko Nor ponies with flowing manes and tails paraded proudly their turquoise-studded bridles and flaunted the gay red, yellow, blue and green of their Mongolian saddlecloths.

Priestly riders, in peaked hats and dark red robes, flourished streamers of yellow silk from their silver prayer wheels and their horsehair wands.

Lesser churchmen, clad in subdued browns and blacks, walked barefoot. But these, too, were gay with the colour of pennanted prayer wheels, gilded pen cases and polished rosaries of garnet, amber and topaz.

Guardians of the treasure animals and their brass-studded boxes were a motley crew of knife-flashing ruffians, with their wirebound bamboo muskets slung in reserve across their backs. The animals were tied nose to tail, in groups of eight. Beside them walked the guards, their raw skin coats loose and the right shoulder of each man bare to the weather, the brown skin glistening with a thick application of yak butter.

The local escorts of soldiers lacked anything that might be termed a uniform, being only the countrified levies of petty officials, clad in dirty homespun long-gowns. But like military folk the world over, they prided themselves on decorations, which included religious amulets, metal studs, brass nose rings, and even pieces of embroidery. Here again were the bare right shoulders, the mark of manly men in Tibet.

Officers of the local escorts paraded with ancient armour, rusty coats of hand-beaten iron links. Or they wore equally archaic tunics of stiff leather covered with strips of fire-hardened bamboo. The soldiers carried broad two-edged swords in stone-studded scabbards and muzzle-loading rifles with tiny twisted butts and the characteristic Tibetan gun rests consisting of a polished pair of curved antelope horns.

In the dust kicked up by the soldiery trudged the pilgrims, including a large percentage of women and invalids in search of health. Women occupy a subordinate place in the religious procedure of Lamaism; they are not permitted to take any part in the ordinary temple services except in the nunneries. Yet the women are very devout, and the passage of the Panchan gave them a precious opportunity to obtain a blessing which would insure a long life with many sons, and Nirvana at the end.

The halt, the lame and the blind are a pathetic part of any Oriental spectacle. Here limped a long summary of Tibetan scourges: epilepsy, syphilis, smallpox, ulcers, goitre, scrofula and vague diseases of the eyes.

Finally, to complete the picture, there were the religious fanatics—"rollers" who made their way over the stony trails like human barrels, "measuring worms" who followed the cavalcade with a painful series of head-to-toe prostrations, and "kneelers" who pushed their way along on torn and bleeding knees.

All the way to Chamdo, the great tea trail was completely disorganized. The advance news of the Panchan's approach held thousands of yak drivers and tea coolies at the inns along the route. No merchant would drive his pack animals past the procession; no leader of coolies would ask his coolies to leave a village where the pontiff's arrival was expected within a week. In the mud-walled caravanserais were piled such stores of brick tea, in transit, as had not been seen for years.

The Panchan took an unflagging interest in gratifying the universal desire for his benediction. No plea for his blessing was too trivial, no infant too sick or humble to receive the touch of his hand.

Thus the cavalcade moved slowly, with many stops. The pontiff enjoyed leisurely travel, for he was moving through country that was new to him, and interesting. The valleys between Lhasa and Chamdo are green with barley; every inch of cultivable soil is used. The country is more thickly populated than any other part of Tibet, and here also is found an unusual type of domestic animal, a cross of yak and cow. Towns, monasteries and isolated dwellings are squeezed against the mountain-sides, in order to keep intact the land where barley may be grown. Dwellings are one-storied, with flat roofs. Monasteries rise to twelve or fifteen stories against the slanting rock, always fort-like in construction.

It was in these monasteries that the nightly stops were made. Each monastery had prepared elaborately for the visitors. Yak-wool curtains adorned doorways and windows; yellow pennants fluttered from flagpoles; the temple prayer wheels were polished and glistening; fresh robes were distributed to priests and acolytes. For the feeding of the cavalcade scores of sheep were slaughtered, hundreds of pounds of yak butter were brought down from the store-houses and piled conveniently against the kitchen walls, and great pyramids of *tsamba* were spread out on the kitchen floors.

As fuel for the two-storey cook-stoves, a ton or two of dried

dung was stacked beside the furnace doors, and ten feet above, the cast-iron cauldrons, four or five feet in diameter, were filled with water for the boiling of meat and the brewing of buttered tea.

As for sleeping quarters, the abbot's own suite of rooms on the top floor of the building would be cleared and prepared for the Panchan's private use, while for his priests and household there would be a series of long gallery-like dormitories, with a yak-wool mattress spread on the floor for each individual. Soldiers and pilgrims would be expected to take the public rooms on the ground floor, along with the animals.

Upon the Panchan's arrival he would be ushered immediately into the main chapel, where two long lines of local priests would be squatting on yak-wool mats along the aisle leading to the elevated throne. At the opposite end of the room would be the monastery orchestra, six or eight monks surrounded by their instruments, including conch shells, tubas, cymbals and several types of flutes.

The Panchan, assisted by his high priest, would immediately open the services, consisting of antiphonal prayers with incidental music, punctuated with mudras and an elaborate waving of the bell and thunderbolt. The mudras are formalized movements of the hands and fingers, used in praying to symbolize the principal abstractions of the Lamaist religion. Each finger represents one of the five primal elements—fire, earth, air, water and ether, and an infinite number of conventionalized combinations of fingers in posture and gesture are used as the objective explanation of the antiphonal prayers as they are intoned.

While the service was in progress, a steady line of young acolytes would pass around steaming bowls of buttered tea, for the refreshment of the worshippers. The Panchan, of course, would not participate in any public eating or drinking, for his followers believe that no such bodily functions are necessary to an incarnation.

At the end of the services, the Panchan would retire to his private rooms, while the worshippers would gather in the main dining-room of the monastery for a dinner of boiled mutton and *tsamba*.

So, from monastery to monastery the incarnation made his way toward the frontier of China. As far as Chamdo the

trail followed a series of diagonal valleys, separated by mountain barriers, and each one watered by a snow-fed river. The frequent bridges across these rivers and their tributaries were of the ordinary suspension type, narrow catwalks hung on twisted ropes from four-inch fibre cables.

A difficult transportation problem soon developed at these bridges. So long was the Panchan's procession of pilgrims that the first part of the cavalcade would frequently wear out a bridge, and a long halt would be necessary to make repairs. The pontiff promptly met this situation by organizing a bridge squad to carry spare cables and deal with emergencies.

More difficult to handle was the problem of the narrow ledged roads which the Tibetans call *drangs*. These are stone shelves or galleries cut out of the walls of the deep gorges. They are often scarcely four feet wide, narrowing still more at corners or water-worn turnings, so that there are many spots where a man can scarcely walk alongside his pack animal without danger of falling down a perpendicular precipice on to the jagged rocks of the torrent below.

It was important to the Panchan that there should be no accidents or casualties during his march. Even a minor mishap might be regarded by his followers as a portent of misfortune for the future. And in the winding *drangs* there was plenty of opportunity for mishap, especially with a loosely disciplined column of men and horses, priests and pilgrims.

On entering the *drang* country, therefore, the pontiff delegated several members of his household to act as captains in various sections of the line. They were instructed to keep the column in close formation, to see that there were no stragglers and to time the rate of march to the slowest detachment. Horsemen were sent through each *drang*, in advance of the column, to insure that the road was clear and that the pathway was in good repair.

With these precautions, everything went fairly smoothly. In fact, all the way to the Chinese border there was only a single mischance. It was a minor incident, but one whose fortunate outcome exerted a great influence upon the Panchan's superstitious followers. They believed that they had seen a miracle.

In the middle of a tortuous *drang* about two miles long, the Panchan, walking at the head of his column, turned a sharp corner to find himself face to face with an oncoming group of

mounted soldiers who were in difficulties with one of their horses.

The group was a hundred yards or so in front of him. The horse had gone suddenly mad, had thrown his rider, and was now bucking and kicking violently on the precarious four-foot ledge.

Behind the Panchan his closely compact column pushed ahead, and the order to halt, which was hastily passed back, was somehow transformed into a warning against an unknown danger. The nervousness which resulted had the makings of panic or stampede. The pontiff sensed that he must act quickly.

Ordinarily he would have ordered one or two of his priestly escort to clear the road, but all the people around him were hampered by umbrellas, prayer wheels and other paraphernalia. The soldiers had retreated down the *drang*, leaving the frightened horse to his own devices. And his rider lay, paralysed with fear, against the cliffside, within a few feet of the flying hoofs.

The Panchan motioned to his attendants to stay back, while he himself walked up close to the animal. He watched the horse carefully, puzzled at the reason for its behaviour. As it whirled, he noticed a bouncing Tibetan sword hanging from its saddle. The sword was loose in its scabbard, and the point of it, he decided, must be sticking in the pony's midriff. It had become caught in the saddle girth, and was the obvious cause of the animal's gymnastics.

Even with the cause revealed, the quieting of the pony was going to be ticklish work. The Panchan was an expert horseman, riding having been his favourite exercise from early youth. In his horsemanship he was an exception to the rule among Tibetans, who ride horses with stolidity rather than grace. They regard the horse as a means of getting from one place to another, and they have none of the equestrian art which is the pride of their Mongolian brethren.

The pony was frightened, the Panchan knew, and his first effort was to reassure it, if possible, with slow gestures. His voice he could not use, because of the noise of the rushing water in the mountain torrent below the ledge road.

With both hands upraised, he approached a little closer. He must make sure that the pony did not suddenly bolt past him, into the front of the cavalcade. Nor did he want it to

WORKERS IN A TIBETAN BARLEY FIELD

(Illustration facing page 224)

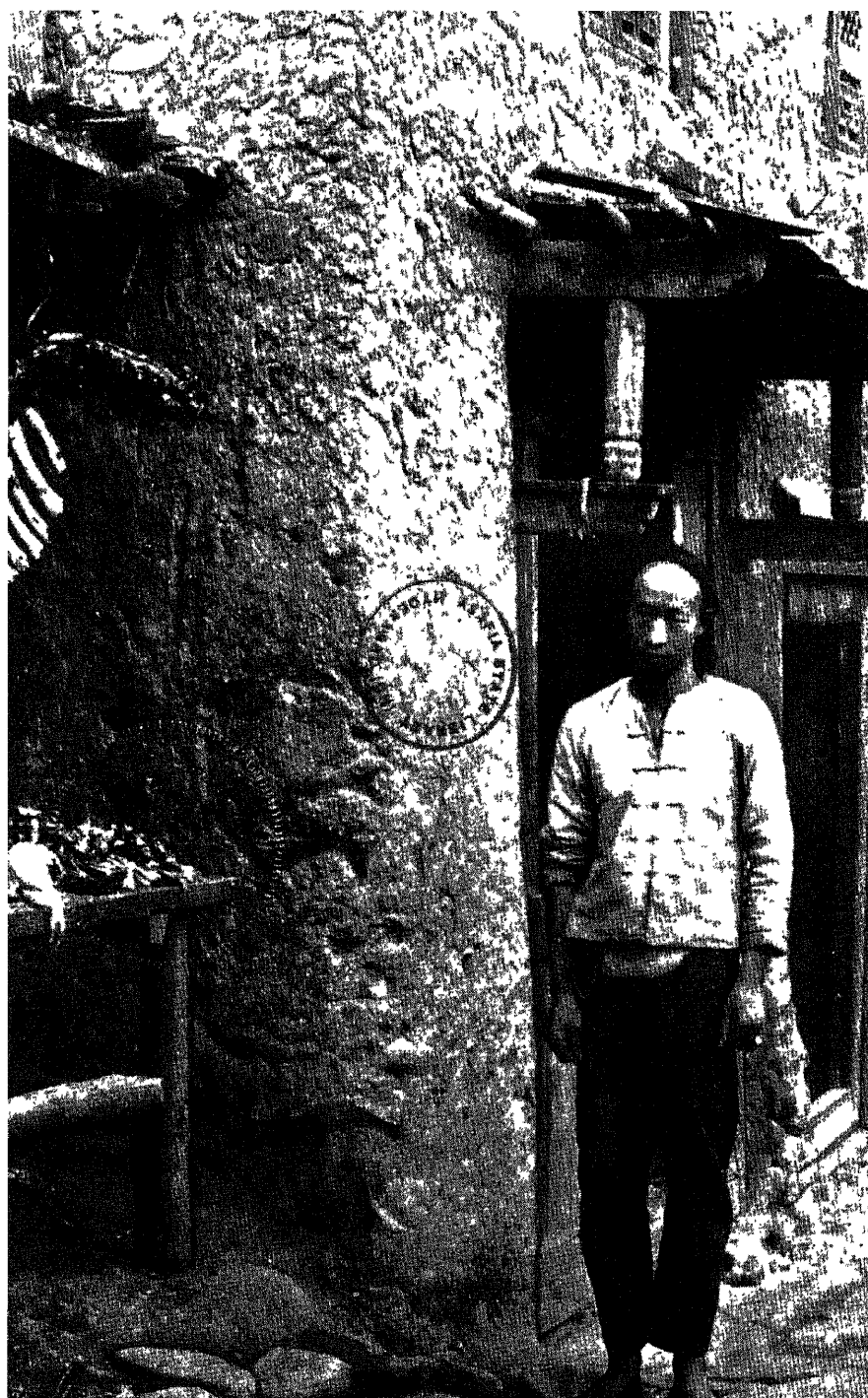
Agriculture flourishes in the Tibetan valleys, up to altitudes of 13,000 feet. The principal crop is barley, from which comes the staple food of the highlands, *isamba*. Cultivation is mainly by women, the men being herdsmen, gold washers, salt gatherers and burden bearers. The sole implement used in the fields is the *ponra*, an adzlike hoe. Summer temperatures often reach 100 degrees in these upland valleys, which are extremely fertile and generously watered by glacier-fed streams. The steep mountain-side in the background is ablaze with the riotous colour of practically every known variety of alpine wildflower, including hyacinth, iris, tiger lily, rhododendron, azalea, bridal wreath, lily of the valley, begonia and primrose.

BUTCHER'S SHOP IN YILUNG

(Illustration facing page 225)

Typical of Tibetan village architecture is this corner of the main street of Yilung, a market town in the Derge district, near the Chinese border. (See chapter "Monkish Buccaneers") The butcher, in this case a Chinese, displays his meat on a crude wooden counter. Part of a yak carcass is hung from the roof, and it remains in place until every particle of meat and bone has been sold. The butcher's cash register is a small cotton-web bag, which he ties around his middle—the lower part of it is just visible under his short coat. It contains mainly gold dust and fragments of Indian silver rupees, which are cut into halves, thirds and quarters to make subsidiary coins. He will also take brick tea as a standard coin of the realm in exchange for his wares.





bolt back toward the huddled soldiers, who would probably be pushed over the road's edge into the water.

Gradually he moved past the prostrate rider. The pony was still bucking madly, but had ceased whirling and had fixed its eyes on the approaching figure.

The pontiff's arms were both held above his head. With a movement so slow as to be almost imperceptible, his right hand approached the pony's bridle. In another moment, he had the reins in a firm grip, and his other hand had reached around and deftly loosened the offending sword.

There were a few feeble bucks from the animal; then it yielded its head to the steady pull of the Panchan's hand, and in a few moments its nose was nestled in its captor's elbow.

Still quivering with fear, it permitted itself to be led slowly back to the head of the cavalcade. Here the Panchan turned it around carefully, patted it gently a few times, and then—to the complete astonishment of his suite—mounted it with a smile and walked it slowly toward the group of soldiers. Meanwhile the prostrate rider had scrambled to his feet and rejoined his companions.

The soldiers retreated back up the drang, and the Panchan, on his mount, led his cavalcade calmly to the monastery which was their goal for the night.

All the talk that night, among his followers, was of the "miracle" which the pontiff had performed. Never again would any of them question the powers of the master.

The Panchan's need for ready cash was met, in part at least, by gifts which he received as he neared the Chinese border—donations from monasteries, local kings and wealthy Tibetans. Several additional treasure mules had to be added to the caravan, each one carrying about \$10,000 in Chinese silver.

This was the status of the cavalcade when it crossed the frontier into China.

It had gone hardly a day's journey, however, when messengers arrived, offering the Lama what a theatre or lecture manager would call a "six weeks' engagement."

It was the most profitable "booking" ever proposed on any stage.

If he would go back 150 miles, and remain six weeks at the

great Kumbum monastery, he would be paid \$3,000,000 in Chinese silver coin.

Six weeks, at \$500,000 a week, certainly exceeds anything that has ever been offered to any "attraction" in a Western country.

The reason for the extravagant offer made by the monks of Kumbum was that it was good business. For more than two hundred years the Kumbum monastery had occupied the premier position among all the Lamaist centres of pilgrimage in North-eastern Tibet. But unfortunately it had not been on the route of the Panchan's march to China, and so suddenly it found its drawing power impaired by many small rivals which had received the direct blessing of the Tashilhunpo incarnation.

Kumbum's pride and prestige could not endure being thus thrust into inferiority. Especially as Kumbum was a brother monastery to the Tashilhunpo monastery—home of the Panchan Lama—it had been founded as a direct offshoot of Tashilhunpo and bore the same name. Curiously enough, it had never been visited by a Panchan, although visits from Dalai Lamas had been comparatively frequent throughout its history.

The enterprising head of Kumbum saw an opportunity to turn defeat into victory. If he could persuade the Panchan to make a special visit to his monastery, a visit of such length and importance that it would overshadow all the blessings he had given to lesser institutions, the pre-eminence of Kumbum would be greater than ever before.

The head of Kumbum was himself a lesser incarnation. But the main point about his character was that, for a professional religionist, he was a business man of large ideas. At the moment he happened to have in his treasury \$3,000,000 in Chinese silver. He called in the leaders of his six thousand monks, and submitted his plan. He had figured out that ready cash would be more important to the Panchan than gold or musk. How much, he asked his advisers, should he offer?

His treasurer drank a good many bowls of tea before he could bring himself to suggest a timid \$100,000. A venturesome abbot thought this was too little, and urged \$150,000. Others in the council advised a little more, or a little less.

The head of Kumbum listened patiently to the discussion.

Finally he commanded silence, and spoke for himself. He might just as well have dropped a dynamite bomb on the stone floor of the council room.

At no time, he said, had he considered less than a million dollars. But listening to the arguments of his counsellors, he had become convinced that his previous ideas had been too small.

The paler the treasurer grew, the bigger the abbot's ideas became. Even while he was speaking, he doubled his first suggestion of an even million.

Still he was not satisfied. He was convinced of one thing—that the monastery should make an offer that the Panchan Lama could not possibly refuse. He decided finally to do what in America is known as shooting the works—to take every dollar in the treasury and offer it to his exalted superior.

Any man of vision, who has once reached a great decision, finds plenty of followers. In no time at all, the Kumbum incarnation had all his counsellors, even to the frightened treasurer, fired with enthusiasm. The plan was unanimously approved, and messengers were sent at once to carry the offer to His Serenity.

A few days later, the Panchan Lama arrived at Kumbum with his 125 pack animals. He left after six weeks with more than 400 animals, most of them groaning under a load of Chinese silver.

As a result of his visit, the prestige of Kumbum became greater than ever before. And the transfer of its treasure to the Panchan enabled him to establish, on his arrival in Peking, credits with the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, adequate to finance a stay in China that lasted much longer than he or any of his lieutenants could ever have anticipated.

The march from Kumbum to Peking was a series of triumphs. He was lauded and publicly worshipped at every Chinese city along the route, until he took up his headquarters, with his retinue of two hundred, in the great Yellow Temple in the eastern part of the Chinese city.

Here he conferred first of all with the Hutuketu, Prince Dilowa, to whom he unfolded his plans for persuading the Chinese government to give immediate and serious attention to its Tibetan provinces.

The prince, whatever his excesses at the dinner table, had great respect and admiration for his spiritual superior, and for once he laid aside his levity and gave the visitor sound and practical information and advice on the Chinese situation. The Hutuketu, beneath his Falstaffian exterior, had shrewdness and common sense in realistic politics, and his many contacts in Peking, with both Chinese and foreigners, gave him a broad viewpoint which was both accurate and valuable.

He showed the Panchan that the failure of the Peking government to control Tibet was due to the gradual disintegration of the whole Chinese Empire. This process, which had been going on for several years, was now nearing its end, and the end, he felt, would unquestionably be the collapse of the old order. What the new China would be, nobody could foresee. But until the country was again united and strong, it could not possibly resume its old role of effective suzerainty in Tibet, Mongolia and the other outlying provinces.

The Panchan was deeply impressed. Many things that he had not previously understood were now clear to him. He must wait yet a little longer, hoping and praying for the reuniting of China, for the restoration of peace and unity.

Nevertheless, he paid his formal calls upon the Peking government, and presented persuasively the needs of Tibet. He was heard with respect and attention, as befitted his high office.

But as the Hutuketu had predicted, there was nothing that Peking could do—in fact, at this moment, the real authority of the Peking government did not extend for more than a few miles beyond the city walls. Every part of China was rife with revolt and strife, province against province, war lord against rival war lord, and everybody against Peking.

Meanwhile, the tail that wagged the dog was Shanghai. Here lay the principal source of funds—the customs treasuries which yielded about \$200,000 a day, in hard cold cash. The war lord who held Shanghai could rule China, and at this moment two rival war lords were fighting in the city's suburbs for possession of this prize. Whoever won, another contender would soon appear to dispute the victor.

Only a week after the Panchan's arrival in Peking, he had a good chance to see first-hand, on his own doorstep, an

example of the intricate and often meaningless causes of the chaos of China. It was the morning of the Festival of the Double Tenth, which takes place on the tenth of the tenth moon. This is the equivalent of the American Thanksgiving Day or the various harvest festivals celebrated in many countries.

In the Yellow Temple, where the Panchan was living, elaborate preparations had been made for the observance of this great holiday, with prayer, music and feasting. The programme went along all right until early evening, when a tremendous commotion broke out in the monastery's main courtyard, spreading rapidly into inner courtyards until the whole place was in an uproar. Fighting between various groups of monks was going on in a dozen different spots, and in a dozen different dialects. Casualties were numerous, injured monks were being hustled off by wide-eyed acolytes to various dormitories behind the temple. But still the fighting went on.

The Panchan, in his quarters, overlooking the main courtyard, paid no attention for the first hour or so. Then he began to be alarmed, as he saw members of his own retinue joining the fight in twos and threes. Suddenly stern, he issued a series of rapid-fire orders, dispatching a dozen members of his staff to seek out the abbot of the monastery and demand his instant presence in the Panchan's upper room.

The abbot, breathlessly apologetic, explained that he was doing his best to quell the rioting, and hoped to have it under control shortly.

"Shortly? Shortly is not good enough," insisted the Panchan. "Take my bodyguard, and stop it at once."

Somehow or other, in the next fifteen minutes, the abbot succeeded in getting word circulated about the premises that the Panchan wanted the fighting stopped. The pontiff, standing on the balcony, could see the news travel across the courtyard. The mere mention of his name was more effective than clubs or staves. In no time at all the whole monastery was again at peace.

But the Panchan wanted to know what had started the rumpus. He ordered that the leaders of the various factions should be brought before him the next morning, and as he sat patiently on his yellow satin throne listening to their stories, he learned—by dint of long questioning—not only what

caused these too-frequent riots in the monastery, but also what was wrong with China and why the fusion of its countless warring factions into a unified nation was proving so difficult.

The twelve hundred Lamaist monks in the Yellow Temple were from all parts of China, with a sprinkling of brethren also from Tibet and Mongolia. They were divided into four main groups—natives of Peking, monks from the west, northerners, southerners. These groups were complete strangers to each other, even in language, food habits and social customs. They had few common ties and no basis for mutual understanding. A man from the south had an inborn hatred for a man from the north, whom he regarded as stupid and uncouth. His feeling was heartily reciprocated by the man from the north, who considered all southerners effete and cowardly.

Most of the southerners were troublemakers. The northerners were fond of resorting to force. The westerners were sharpsters, full of petty tricks. The Pekingese took advantage of everybody else, because they were on their home grounds.

They were all ordinary human beings, of the kind which fills overpopulated China. But this was the way they regarded each other, owing to the narrow provincialism which has been a characteristic of the Chinese mind for hundreds of generations.

It was all quite new to the Panchan Lama, although the Hutuketu had hinted at it, in general terms, in their numerous conferences. As he interrogated the four leaders who were brought before him, the first fact that struck him was that he could talk to them only through an interpreter. None of them spoke Tibetan, although they recited Tibetan texts glibly in their official capacity—without any idea of what the words meant.

They tried to answer his questions, to the interpreter, in Mandarin, the language of Peking, which the Panchan did not understand. But they themselves, except for the leader of the Pekingese faction, were not fluent in Mandarin. When they had to give an answer that required anything but the most elementary words, they were forced to fall back on their own dialects.

Half the day was gone before the Panchan finally found out what he wanted to know—the cause of the rioting.

It seems that the Peking cooks had been ordered to serve

polished rice, as a special delicacy for the festival. Rice is "rich man's food" in Peking, for none of it is grown north of the Yangtze River. The ordinary food of the monastery was *kiao-liang*, which is a grain known to the Western world as kaffir corn and is the staple cereal of Northern China and Manchuria. Sometimes this was varied with parched barley, the *tsamba* of Tibet and Mongolia.

The rice provided for the festival by the monastery cooks was the cause of the trouble. Monks who are natives of Peking know little or nothing about rice, and so they bought the cheapest rice on the market—probably pocketing the difference. It was not polished rice at all, but unhusked and brown. As for the cooking of it, they made no effort to make it either tasty or palatable.

When it was brought to the tables, the southern monks immediately set up a howl of protest. The Peking monks rose noisily to the defence of their brethren in the kitchens.

Presently the northerners joined the heated controversy, roundly abusing all rice-eaters and loudly extolling the virtues of *kiao-liang*. The westerners knew barley best, and challenged the advocates of other cereals to name anything better than *tsamba*.

Soon the argument began to develop into a battle. Here and there bowls and chopsticks were used as weapons of assault. A flying phalanx of monkish cooks from the kitchens charged through the dining-room, armed with teapots and various kitchen utensils, defending their craftsmanship with impartial assaults upon anybody who stood up against them.

Soon factional battle-cries began to go up and were heard by monks at prayer and meditation, who came running to join the fray. Fifty advocates of *tsamba* adjourned to the main courtyard and massed there, withstanding raids from groups of rice-eaters and partisans of *kiao-liang*.

And so it went on until it had spread over the entire vast enclosure of the temple and had resulted in as many broken heads and bruised bodies as a Donnybrook Fair.

The Panchan Lama, when he finally drew out the information that all the fighting had arisen over the merits of the staple foods of four sections of China, dismissed his witnesses. Pondering over the incident, he perceived that here in miniature was China. The chaos and disorder that reigned everywhere were due to jealousies, misunderstandings and

bigotries as petty as those which had caused the riot in the temple.

Men from the north had no common ties with men from the south. Men from the east had no basis of understanding with men from the west. The Cantonese hatred of foreigners included brother Chinese from other provinces. A man from Shanghai rejoiced at the misfortunes of a man from Chengtu; a man from Peking wished no prosperity or comfort to a man from Yunnanfu.

Everywhere in China patriotism was local, or provincial. There were no national loyalties. A nation which had been united and strong under an emperor, could only fall apart, hopelessly, unless the imperial symbol was replaced by strong leadership.

All this gave the Panchan plenty of food for thought and meditation. The path to peace seemed to grow more difficult every day.

He presently solved his mental conflict, for the time being, by accepting the Hutuketu's invitation to visit Mongolia. This at least would prevent his becoming too closely allied with a Peking government obviously destined for a rapid defeat and oblivion.

In Mongolia the Panchan established himself at Peiling-miao, a Lamaist monastery in the Gobi Desert, 150 miles from the nearest railway. Here, inaccessible to the factions which sought to draw him into political turmoil, he studied the whole Asiatic situation, sifting the reports which came to him from his agents in Lhassa, Urga, Peking and a dozen Chinese centres. As the head of a religion which had millions of followers throughout this vast area, he was able to organize an information and propaganda service that was accurate, prompt and effective.

His main objective now was to protect not merely Tibet, but his whole world, from the Caspian Sea to the Pacific, from the chaos of selfish feudalism which seemed to be engulfing Asia. His plans ceased to be limited by any national boundaries.

World currents whirled on. The Peking Government died and was buried. A new capital was set up at Nanking, with rulers who did not know the Panchan Lama. To them he was too remote to have any share in their immediate plans for the unification of China.

The Panchan watched with a hopeful but unquiet mind

Nanking's efforts to pacify the near-by provinces. Fighting went on, sometimes on six fronts simultaneously. The day when Tibet's welfare could have consideration seemed as far away as ever.

From his desert isolation, the Panchan watched a new cloud appearing on the horizon. Japan, pushing steadily against her treaty boundaries, had been fomenting in every possible way the forces of disunion in China. To the Panchan it became steadily clearer that the future great enemy of Lamaism was Japan.

This was the menace on which he now concentrated his attention, and toward which he consciously sought to unite his 10,000,000 followers in China, Mongolia and Tibet.

While political experimentation occupied the Chinese rulers, the Panchan Lama forged the strongest spiritual weapon in Asia. Nowhere else was religion to play any important part in the clash between China and Japan. But in Mongolia loyalty to Lamaism, and to its head, became a vital and ever-present force.

Heretofore, for centuries, Mongolia had been the weakest province in China, a constant seat of trouble and unrest, loyal to nobody—not even to itself. Sometimes its people had been the mute victims of international intrigue; at other times they had been the helpless catspaws of Russian imperialism whenever it turned its eyes toward the east.

Now, for the first time, Mongolia had strength and leadership. But this fact came to the belated notice of the Nanking Government only when the Japanese planted their flags in Manchuria.

CHAPTER FOUR

A MIRACLE IS PERFORMED

God does not fight with sword or gun,
And yet he makes his foemen run.
He stabs them with a placid eye
And they retreat to pray . . . or die.

—*Kanjur Commentaries*

I AM convinced that the Japanese have never yet fully realized what happened to them in 1931 when their advance into Manchuria was suddenly halted. Their gobbling of China was averted, stopped for perhaps a decade. If they had succeeded fully in Manchuria, there is no doubt at all that China, south of the Great Wall, would have been subjugated in quick order.

What the big-boned Mohammedan, General Ma, with 300,000 soldiers harassing the Japanese lines of northbound communication, had been unable to do; what the wily General Sun, with 250,000 men backed against the Great Wall, failed completely in accomplishing; what a million armed irregulars, in a thousand groups scattered from tip to top of Manchuria, could not achieve—this miracle suddenly came to pass, through the unforeseen intervention of a quiet little man seated on a cushion of yellow satin in a desert monastery at Peilingmiao, which means Temple of a Hundred Miracles.

For twenty-five years Japan had been silently at work, preparing the way for her conquest of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Manchuria was the first objective. As for Mongolia, that could take its turn. Half of the important Mongol banners were located in the western part of Manchuria and once they were subjugated, the rest of Mongolia would surely fall an easy prey. So at least the Nipponese General Staff thought, with an assurance born of years of intensive study.

It was on Manchuria, therefore, that the Japanese had con-

centrated their early intrigues. Spies like Major Kato and tools like Chang Tso-lin were the precursors of a vast horde of agents provocateurs who spread like a swarm of locusts. The work was done with a thoroughness which seemed to guarantee that every banner and *hsien* (Manchurian administrative district) would fall prostrate before the invading Japanese, when the time came.

The Nipponese method of penetration and infiltration was unbelievably intensive in its detail and completeness.

A single illustration of its widespread scope was the system of "hotels" which spread throughout Manchuria during these years. In even the smallest villages, enterprising Japanese reservists gradually worked their way inward from the border towns and established little inns, secretly subsidized by the Japanese Government, and each of these became the centre of a small group of Japanese barbers, shoemakers and tradesmen—all reservists, and all working on the docile local population for whatever end Tokyo directed.

Twenty-five years is a long time. At the beginning of this period the Manchurian villagers hardly knew what a foreigner looked like, and were hostile to any kind of alien face. By the end of the time a new generation had sprung up, which had become accustomed to the sight of Japanese everywhere. There were Japanese advisers and counsellors in every *yamen* (county administrative building), in every important police headquarters, in every trade centre. The Japanese commercial firms and banks bought all the crops, controlled all the iron and coal, handled all the transportation facilities.

In the Mongolian areas of Manchuria, the Japanese progress was slower, but equally dogged and determined. No matter how small the banner might be, there was at least one highly placed official in Japanese employ, generously subsidized to look after the Mikado's interests. Among nomadic tribes, the system had to be a little different from that used among city dwellers, but the Japanese plan was foolproof and provided for every contingency. At key places, Japanese reservists started fruit farms and stud farms, with numerous Japanese employees, constituting nuclei of influence with the surrounding nomads.

The three million Mongols in Manchuria constituted an experimental laboratory, for the creation of policies which would surely be equally effective on their three million wilder

brethren who inhabited the steppes and deserts of Inner Mongolia.

The Japanese steam roller was theoretically invincible. When at last, after twenty-five years, the time came for it to advance, there was surely nothing that could stop it. Neither China, nor the great powers, nor the League of Nations. All of these looked on, helpless, while Japan prepared to swallow Manchuria at one gulp.

The Panchan Lama, from his isolated headquarters in the Temple of a Hundred Miracles, watched the Japanese *coup d'état*. Monks and abbots in a thousand Manchurian *yuris* (nomad tents) were his eyes and ears.

Patiently he waited for China to act, for the powers to intervene, for the mighty League of Nations to speak its mind.

China did nothing: the Nanking Government, acknowledging its utter impotence, merely ran back and forth among the foreign diplomats, pleading for help. All of the powers replied with empty-handed sympathy—nobody cared to dispute Japan with armed force. The League of Nations could do nothing more than promise to send a futile commission "to inquire and investigate."

The Panchan gave them all a chance. But when nothing happened, he decided to go ahead in his own way.

Acting exactly as he had done in Peking a year before, at the riot in the temple, he issued a series of rapid-fire orders, dispatching messengers to every part of Lamaist Manchuria and Mongolia. Thus he sent forth the command that Lamaism must stand united against Japanese imperialism.

His instructions were that all his followers should maintain their loyalty to the ancient traditions of Chinese sovereignty and staunchly oppose the wiles and intrigues of the invader.

He did not advocate the use of force; that was obviously not only useless, but the very thing that the Japanese were prepared to meet. But he had a stronger weapon, which he had been testing all his life, namely, the spiritual power of God incarnate operating through the hearts and wills of a united people.

Here, after all, was something the Japanese could not combat.

In the Mongol province of Heilungkiang, in Manchuria,

the officials whom they had bribed failed to function. The banners seemed somehow indifferent to all the benefits of Japanese rule. There was an intangible inertia that could not be overcome. No matter what the Japanese suggested, there was a non-co-operation that stifled and suffocated every proposal of Nipponese enterprise.

Japanese motion picture men visited the Mongol tent-cities, taking pictures of the nomads waving Japanese flags and banzaing the Japanese officers, to be shown throughout China. But it was painfully evident from a view of the pictures that they were "made in Japan." Chinese audiences hooted joyfully at the thousand and one subtleties whereby the Mongols, in front of the lens, indicated the real state of their feelings.

The Japanese propaganda leaders were frankly puzzled. But they consulted their plan book, which provided for "every contingency." They were delighted to find a scheme for special use in situations like this. It provided for the creation of new provinces, which would isolate reluctant minorities under a semblance of self-government. So they created a "Mongol province," under the headship of a Mongol prince whom they placed on their Supreme Council.

But he had no followers. His new position seemed to his former subjects to put him in direct competition with the Panchan Lama, and there were no deserters from the Tashilhunpo incarnation.

The sudden failure of all the Japanese plans in Manchuria's Mongol province led the Nipponese higher command to accelerate its schemes for absorbing the nomads of Inner Mongolia. The blueprints showed that a series of armed forays into Inner Mongolia would accomplish the necessary subjugation of the nomad banners. Armed forays were ordered, with raiding parties setting out in all directions, some along the Great Wall, some into the Gobi Desert, some into the area around Peilingmiao, residence of the Panchan Lama.

The total result was nil. For the most part the parties encountered little resistance. The nomads melted before them, retreating with their herds. But as soon as a raiding party left a given area, the nomads returned. It was exactly like poking one's finger into a rubber balloon.

Not always, however, If a raiding party was small, or if it

broke into several small units, it was likely to disappear, swallowed up in the endless steppes. Stragglers were mysteriously picked off. Hardly any of the raiding parties returned without serious depletions in their ranks. The nomad banners followed the general lines of the Panchan's counsel against using force, but when they found a few stray Japanese wandering around the landscape they quietly finished them off, exactly as a housemaid would brush flecks of dust from a table-top.

The bards of the Mongolian banners will not soon forget their story of the band of Japanese raiders who arrived one day at Peilingmiao. The little bow-legged officer in charge of the detachment was only about four inches taller than his sword. He wore thick lenses, and besides his military equipment he carried a thermos flask, a pair of binoculars and a camera, each one attached to him by a shoulder strap which made the front of his uniform look like a bargain sale of Sam Browne belts. He could not have been more than twenty-two years old, but he took his job very seriously and tried to look like Hannibal crossing the Alps.

He led his twenty men, on shaggy Mongolian ponies, to the gates of the walled lamasery. He had wandered into Peilingmiao by chance while pursuing a band of General Sun's irregulars, and had been informed by his hired Mongol interpreter that this was the residence of a high official of Lamaism. He decided that it would be good business to interview this personage and win his allegiance to Japan.

At the gates he pompously demanded the immediate presence of the pontiff, little realizing whom he was ordering about so imperiously.

The guardians of the gate were torn between fear of the Japanese soldiers and awe of the pontiff. Nobody wanted to take the bespectacled officer's message to the upper room where the Panchan was engaged in prayer.

When the lieutenant saw that he was getting no action, he ordered his troop to dismount. To the monks at the gate this meant that the soldiers were probably going to blow the place up. Something had to be done, and they tried to decide whether it was better to die at their posts, or to interrupt the incarnation at his mudras. Eventually the interpreter was informed that a messenger was being sent. The monks

found a member of the Panchan's retinue, a Tashilhunpo priest of humble station, who was completely self-possessed in the face of the raiders and assured the gatemen that a little matter like this would be quite simply handled by his exalted master.

Unhurriedly he proceeded to the upper room and waited quietly beside the praying pontiff until the latter paused and motioned him to speak. The priest apologized for his interruption and explained the situation which had led the local monks to send him.

The Panchan smiled, thought for a moment, then said in his quick, low voice:

"Tell them this: the warrior lives by violence and by violence shall he perish."

That was all. He went back to his prayers. The messenger, with a calm confidence that the Panchan's cryptic sentence would prove a potent charm against the raiders, broke into a run as soon as he was out of the room.

He arrived breathless at the gate, which was now surrounded by a milling crowd of monks, acolytes and villagers. He pushed through to the Japanese officer and recited to the interpreter the words which the Panchan had uttered.

The interpreter repeated them four times to the bow-legged lieutenant. The latter's brow wrinkled. He pretended not to understand what the message meant, and probably was not sure whether it was a compliment or an insult. But he had been ordered to deal diplomatically and carefully with religious matters, and after a brief hesitation he ordered his men back on their horses and rode away.

The mystified Peilingmiao natives repeated the Panchan's phrase over and over to themselves and tried to find a hidden significance in the words of what they now regarded as a *mantram*, or sacred sentence.

Some time that afternoon a group of villagers, who thought they had discovered the meaning of the *mantram*, rode away on their ponies, well armed, with the setting sun at their backs. And that's the last that was heard of the Japanese raiding party.

It was while the Panchan Lama was still in Peilingmiao that I met in Shanghai a member of his cabinet, Tsu Hai-san. The latter had come south to make arrangements for the

ONLY GODS MAY DRINK FROM THIS CUP

(Illustration facing page 240)

Here is shown one of the most beautiful of Tibetan libation cups, now in the collection of Vyvian Dent of Shanghai. The bowl is the upper half of a human skull; the base and cover are exquisitely carved from Tibetan bronze, rich in gold, and set with jewels. The heads and figures depict the three ages of man—birth, life and death. . . . Bowls similar to this are used in every Lamaist temple during the formal religious ceremonies, filled with red-coloured water simulating human blood offered to the gods as a sacrifice which will surely command their immediate and sympathetic attention. The use of these cups is one of the most persistent and obvious links with the olden days of demon worship, when human sacrifices were made frequently on every altar.

TEA AND CAKES WITH THE JONGPEN

(Illustration facing page 241)

Seated on a mat made from the skin of a snow leopard, the Jongpen (commander of a local *jong*) and his wife await the arrival of ceremonial guests. In front of them is a carved lacquer Chinese table holding two gold-based teacups and a plate of Tibetan barley cakes. The Jongpen wears a small turquoise cabochon in his right ear, but in his left he carries a long five-piece ear-ring of very brilliant turquoises set in burnished gold. Otherwise he is dressed in a costume more Chinese than Tibetan—mandarin hat and official robe. His wife's coiffure consists of a gold-knobbed "platform" and four plumes. Her elaborate jewellery is of coral, turquoise and amber, set with gold, seed pearls and jade. The tent in the background is an importation from England, brought in at great expense over the Phari trail.





pontiff's contemplated visit to Nanking, at the invitation of the Chinese government. In Shanghai he was purchasing radio equipment and motor trucks for the use of the Panchan's household at the Temple of a Hundred Miracles.

My meeting with Tsu Hai-san took place at a wedding anniversary party given by a Chinese aviator, a colonel of the government's air force. The colonel was an old flying friend of mine, who came from Szechwan and knew the Tibetan border. He was aware of my interest in Tibet, and as a surprise for me had invited the Tibetan envoy.

Tsu and I sat beside each other throughout the twenty-five-course meal which was the main feature of the party. We drank together a vast quantity of Three-star Hennessy and mulled Chinese rice wine. During the first fifteen courses our conversation was general and concerned mainly the night clubs and cabarets of Shanghai. Toward the end of the meal, however, we began to feel well enough acquainted to discuss Tibetan subjects. I told him of my boyhood on the northern border of India, of my relationship with Chanti and of my recent contacts with the Urgan Hutuketu. He spoke to me of his early days in Tashilhunpo, of his education in Peking and, finally, of the problems which had faced the Panchan Lama in Mongolia.

Before the evening was over we had dropped formality and were on a basis of friendship. We exchanged cards with promises to meet again before Tsu's return to Nanking.

I probably would not have taken advantage of this exchange of courtesies, but Tsu took them at full value, and called upon me at my apartment before luncheon the next day.

One of the first things that attracted him in my den, where I led him for a cocktail, was a coloured map of Tibet. It was one I had secured from the British General Staff, containing a remarkable amount of detail. Tsu had never seen one of these, and he was enormously interested.

His interest led me to show him my entire collection of Asiatic maps. It was something on which I had spent a great deal of time and effort. Naturally it pleased me to find him so intrigued.

He traced the path which the Panchan Lama had followed from Tashilhunpo to Peking, and his narrow forefinger stopped at every important town along the route, while he gave me a personal account of what had happened there.

Then we went to aeroplane maps and pictures. I showed him photographs of Chinese cities and small areas of country that looked much like the steppes of Mongolia or the mountain barriers of Eastern Tibet. He was very quick at learning to interpret these vertical pictures, with their lack of perspective.

Tsu stayed to lunch; and after lunch we went back into the den, where he continued his study of my maps. He was hampered in this by his lack of knowledge of the English language, which he forthwith resolved to learn.

For the rest of the week Tsu spent fully half his time at my home. When he returned to Nanking, it was with an urgent invitation on his part for me to visit him there. And, on my part, an equally pressing offer of continued hospitality under my roof, whenever he was again in Shanghai.

I was fairly busy during the next two or three weeks, and had no occasion to go to Nanking. But I followed developments there, as always, with a keen interest. So far as these developments concerned Tibet and the Panchan Lama, I already had a pretty good background. I knew that the Nanking leaders had been slow to realize how and why the Japanese advance had been stopped in Manchuria. All sorts of explanations had been made. The military observers of the great powers, sitting at their ease hundreds of miles from the theatre of action, read the fragmentary dispatches and gave textbook interpretations of why the steam roller had halted—that the gains were being “consolidated,” that the lines of communication were too long, that the weather had intervened, that everything was going “according to plan.” All of which was pure and unalloyed balderdash.

The real truth had reached Nanking by degrees, and penetrated the official mind slowly. But when it was at last clearly understood, and Nanking knew that their unexpected ally was the Panchan Lama and his peaceful army of 6,000,000 devoted Mongol followers, they proceeded to make the most of his unanticipated friendship.

It was necessary not merely to express their gratitude and appreciation for what he had done, but to find means of binding him permanently to them.

Here was a leader who had proved that he could hold the northern line against a threat which was otherwise irresistible. Something besides thank-yous would be necessary to cement a permanent alliance with this protective power,

To create and confirm such an alliance, they decided to invite the Panchan to visit Nanking. They were prepared to offer him practically anything he wanted, if he would continue to hold back the Japanese tide in Northern China.

Before meeting Tsu Hai-san, I had been spending a great deal of time in Nanking. For more than two years I had been selling aeroplanes for American companies—I was back with my old love, the open skyways which had first fascinated me in wartime France. I had sold the Nanking government the largest order of planes in Chinese history, twenty American Corsair bombers. They were magnificent machines, sturdy and reliable, excellent for a fledgling air service.

I was naturally in close touch with the Nanking leaders through my aviation activities. I had flown all twenty of my Corsairs, some of them many times, instructing the Chinese pilots, testing and delivering, supervising repairs, experimenting with bombs and bomb sights.

It was on Tsu's second trip to Shanghai that he spoke to me about the possibility of flying over Tibet. His mind saw no difficulties, especially as he had been tremendously impressed with the power and mobility of my Corsairs. But I showed him that such a flight could not be made in a Corsair: their cruising range was too limited, their petrol capacity too small. The kind of machine needed was one that could stay aloft for twenty-four hours, could climb easily over 21,000-foot passes, could land with reasonable safety at altitudes of 10,000 feet and over. . . . It has never been done yet. But it will be done soon—next year, perhaps, if I have a bit of luck.

I received the news of the Panchan's approaching visit with keen interest. For the greater part of my life I had been following his career. Once, in India, I had almost seen him, waiting for hours in a crowd of spectators at a railway station of the East India Railway when his special train came through, unfortunately without stopping. In Peking, too, during his brief visit there, I had missed him by being detained in Shanghai on business.

But I felt that I was pretty thoroughly acquainted with him. Tsu and I had become fast friends and he now made my apartment his social headquarters. Here, during his third trip to Shanghai, he brought four other important members of the lama's retinue—Shia, who was to become Minister of War; Tsen, in charge of communications; Lo, the highest

religious officer under the Panchan; and Liu, who later became the incarnation's ambassador at the Chinese capital. My friend Tsu was soon to become Lamaist Minister of Foreign Affairs.

It was my intimate acquaintance with these advisers that led to my being invited, a few weeks after the Panchan's arrival in Nanking, to a personal and private audience with His Serenity.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PANCHAN LOOKS FOR AN AMERICAN

I learned it from my Guiding Star,
You are my friend, I know you are.
I'm not quite certain whence you came,
I'm not quite certain of your name,
I know not if you're rich or poor.
Only this matters—I am sure
You've met the test: *your eye is good*,
Ours is a natural brotherhood.

—*Ku Hn-ming's Psalm of Loyalties*

MY meetings with Tsu Hai-san and his four companions in Shanghai, both on the occasion of their first visit and also at frequent intervals thereafter, plunged me into the very heart of Tibetan affairs.

All four of Tsu's companions followed Tsu's lead in making my home on Avenue Joffre their gathering place when not occupied with the small business affairs which had brought them to the city. These affairs had to do mainly with the purchasing of various commodities for use in Peilingmiao, and here I was able to be of some assistance to them through my acquaintance with merchants and brokers. Aside from business matters, they were all five full of inquisitiveness and eager to go through a comprehensive round of sightseeing. I happened to have enough leisure so that I could act as their guide and enjoy their reactions to foreign customs and the varied paraphernalia of Western civilization.

Tsu Hai-san, grooming himself for a position as minister of foreign affairs in the future Panchan government, had not been in a "foreign" city since his schooldays in Peking. He wanted to know more about foreigners and foreign customs; he sought my aid in learning the rudiments of the English and French languages; he tried dressing in foreign style; he delighted in going about with me to restaurants and cabarets frequented by foreigners.

His four companions were in Shanghai less frequently than

Tsu Hai-san, but whenever any of them came they joined us, and regarded me as Tsu's *fidus Achates*. Friendships between an American and an Oriental are strange relationships, difficult to achieve and difficult to define. They can only begin after a basis of complete confidence has been established; this usually takes a long time, interrupted by the difficulties of language and customs, and by the natural suspicion which all Orientals have toward all foreigners.

But Tsu and I, for some reason, seemed to hit off from the beginning. My smattering of his language was one factor that helped, but probably more important was the fact that I knew enough about Tibetan customs to avoid any of the *faux pas* of etiquette by which it is easy for a foreigner to give unwitting offence to an Oriental. My knowledge of Tibet, particularly from the side of India, interested him, and he was always interrogating me about British policy and British thinking, as related to the problems of Lhasa. Also, Tsu was fascinated by aviation and wanted to know everything about it, even to details of my daily work as an aeroplane salesman-pilot.

Tsu had a long narrow face, strongly featured, and a somewhat cynical expression. He was slender of frame, medium in height. He had a tremendous capacity for Scotch and soda, and never showed the slightest signs of its affecting him, except that his eyes would redden a bit and his cheeks flush. His speech was fluent and nervous, assisted by many gestures with both hands. In company, the feature of his manner was his exceeding politeness, which was without affectation. He was quick at acquiring new customs and manners: although he had never eaten at a European table until his arrival in Shanghai, he soon handled his knives and forks as well as any of us. In no time at all, he learned ballroom dancing, and in a few weeks was an adept.

Lo, the Panchan's high priest, was more soft-spoken than Tsu, and had an innate dignity befitting his exalted office. His speech was restrained and thoughtful, his voice low, his smile quiet and disciplined. He had none of Tsu's eagerness to investigate every new thing, and he was not entirely at ease on the rare occasions when he went with us to popular restaurants. But he had a fine brain, a keen sense of responsibility and a genuine sincerity.

Tsu was in his early forties; Lo, about thirty-five.

The other Tibetans in their group were Shia and Tsen. The former was big of frame, handsome of face, and as Falstaffian in his disposition as the Hutuketu of my Peking days. His capacity for beer was unbelievable. Tsen was bottle-shouldered and the smallest of the five. He always dressed in military uniform; he was quiet, well-behaved, and versed in the languages that he needed as radio operator and chief of communications for the Panchan.

After three months of almost continuous contact with these five advisers to the Panchan Lama, it was perhaps not strange that I was invited to visit the great personage. Yet the invitation came to me as a surprise. None of the five Tibetans had ever mentioned it or suggested it. Even Tsu, who was on such close terms of daily social contact with me that he discussed frankly many of the minutest details of his office, had felt that he could not speak about the possibility of my seeing His Serenity, until the project had the full approval of the Panchan himself.

There was one phase of Tsu's mission in Shanghai that he had not told me, but which explained his otherwise mystifying desire to know all about the more important Americans in Shanghai. I learned only after my visit to Nanking that the pontiff had instructed Tsu to be on the look-out for a reliable American who could act as his personal adviser, especially on matters of aviation and trade, and on the development of a primitive country along Western lines.

The Panchan particularly specified "an American," because like most Orientals he felt that the Americans were the only foreigners who would not be swayed by the political ambitions of greedy imperialistic governments, or who would not take advantage of their preferment to pave the way for aggression.

Tsu knew me so much better than he did any other American that it was not remarkable he should think mainly of me in connection with the job to be filled. But he showed a typically Oriental slant of mind in not divulging to me the slightest hint of the matter. Most Westerners, I think, under the same circumstances would have come out frankly and confidentially with the whole story—for this was practically the only secret that he had from me.

I often wondered at his desire to meet any and every American in Shanghai. There were at this time probably five thousand Americans living in Shanghai, and I myself knew no more than four or five hundred. Even among these, my acquaintance was casual with all but a small circle. Tsu expected me to know every one of them, and when he would hear any American's name mentioned, he would rush to me with an immediate desire to be taken to meet him. On one occasion, at the Lafayette Gardens in the French Concession, Tsu had been out on the floor dancing with the Number One sing-song girl. He returned to our table all aglow with news of a remarkable young American whom his partner had been praising. According to her account, he was a famous air pilot, who had lately arrived in Shanghai from the States. He was very rich, and he had his own aeroplane, which he was going to use for an aerial tour of China.

"You know him, of course?" Tsu asked confidently.

"I'm not sure," I said, without much interest. "What's his name?"

Tsu looked up sharply. He interpreted my remark as meaning that there were so many rich young Americans with private aeroplanes in Shanghai at the moment that his description might fit dozens of different people.

"It's a very odd name," he particularized. "Almost like a Chinese name—Daw Zung."

I repeated the name two or three times to myself, trying to figure how it might be pronounced by its owner, without the mutilations of the sing-song girl and Tsu. Probably it was "Dawson," I concluded.

I knew nobody by the name of Dawson, aviator or otherwise. There was an American named Danson, but he was in the peanut business, and was at present somewhere in the north.

I told Tsu that the sing-song girl's aviator was probably a fiction character—perhaps a sailor or ship's officer, full of Hongkew whisky, spinning a yarn.

"But no," insisted Tsu. "I think the tale is true. I think there is such a young man. I think we shall go and find him to-morrow."

He was so persistent about the matter the next day that I made the rounds of the hotels. After combing the city, I actually found an American named Dawson registered at the

Cathay. I sent up my card and Tsu and I were ushered to his room. He was a portly gentleman of about sixty, so deaf that he could hardly hear my shouted words of apology, even through his ear trumpet.

I appeared at Nanking for my first audience with the Panchan one February evening about six o'clock. He was living in state, as the guest of the government, in the summer residence of the Chinese *generalissimo*, Chiang Kai-shek. The house was a sprawling one-story bungalow, just outside the city wall, built against a wooded hill-side at the foot of the Purple Mountain which has become a place of pilgrimage since the erection there of the sacred tomb of Sun Yat-sen, the George Washington of China.

I was met at the railway station by my friend Tsu, who escorted me to the Panchan's bright yellow Buick limousine, upholstered in velvet of the same sacred colour, and equipped with a regal array of cut glass and silver. There were two Tibetans in the front seat, both uniformed in red fur-lined coats and brimless pagoda-like hats. One was the driver, the other the footman. There were four more of the same resplendent lackeys, belted and pistoled, who stood on the running boards, holding fast to silver handles in the roof of the car, two on each side.

At the house Tsu and I were met by our friend Lo. His greeting was official and ceremonious, and one would never have guessed from his grave countenance that our last previous meeting had been around the tables of the cabaret at the Lafayette Gardens in Shanghai. He took us to his private sitting-room, where smiling Tibetan acolytes served us buttered tea, cakes and cigarettes. The cigarettes, I remember, were British Capstans, and the cakes were a Chinese imitation of Huntley and Palmer's.

Formal apologies were made for a slight delay in my appointment with the Grand Lama, the explanation being that he had extended his usual prayer period somewhat and wished to change from his praying clothes to ceremonial raiment before seeing me.

I occupied the interlude by glancing around the room and asking a few questions about its furnishings, which were oddly and glaringly American. I use the word "glaringly" not

because they were not in perfect taste—for they were, but because I had expected to see Chinese furnishings, and it was a real surprise to come upon a house here, whose interior looked exactly as if it had stepped out of an Elsie de Wolfe bandbox.

Lo explained to me that the rooms had been furnished by Madame Chiang Kai-shek, who was a graduate of Wellesley. Many of the pieces had been brought from America, others had been made by careful Chinese carpenters, from Madame's india-ink drawings.

There was a straight-backed Grand Rapids chair in a corner beside the bookcase, which had struck my eye as soon as I entered the room. On it was resting a huge yellow silk affair, which looked like a mammoth tea cozy—a fur-lined hood, open in front, on top of a padded cushion. Under the hood were two tiny "lion dogs," of a Tibetan breed which is much like the well-known Pekingese.

These dogs have an important religious significance in Lamaism and are always kept in personal attendance upon the great incarnations. They are the rarest breed in the world, being exclusively a palace dog in their native Tibet. As the living symbols of a legend, they recall the occasion when Buddha was befriended by lions when lost in a forest. Tibetan monks, never having seen a lion, had tried by breeding and cross-breeding several types of small dogs to create an animal which would look like a miniature of their conception of the King of Beasts. After hundreds of years of experimentation, they produced this diminutive *Fu-kao* (Buddha dog). Having created the breed, they reserved it for the Grand Lamas as one of the badges of the holy office. Every *Fu-kao* had a white spot on his forehead, representing the pearl of wisdom on the forehead of Buddha, and a white "saddle" marking over the loins, symbolic of the seat on which Buddha sat when his lions took him from place to place.

The Panchan's pair of lion dogs accompanied him everywhere. The supervision of their care was one of the principal duties of Lo, religious prime minister and high priest. Each of the two dogs had its own retinue of servants.

At Lo's invitation—which was a most unusual one—I went over to the chair and tried to make friends with the little canine royalties. The male dog, a white and tan, consented to

let me scratch his ears and indicated his pleasure by wagging a feathered tail, which fluttered amusingly in its tight little backward curl. But the female, which was jet black, gave me an experimental sniff and then retreated with unfriendly scowls into the shadow of her hooded refuge. She would have none of me—one smell was enough.

I went back to my buttered tea, and a stiff-mannered monk brought in a bronze dish with the dogs' supper, which consisted of well-cooked rice sprinkled with diced mutton. As soon as the attendant entered the room, the two canine aristocrats jumped to the floor and ran toward him. At Lo's command, he deferentially placed the bowl on the floor beside my chair. I then had the great honour of watching them eat, daintily and sparingly. More than half of the rice and meat remained in the dish when they signified that they had finished, by scampering together back to their chair and leaping to their perches. The attendant, who had stood by counting his beads, picked up the bowl and went out, smiling happily that his charges had seemed so well satisfied with the service he had rendered them.

Word came that the Panchan was ready. We walked to the audience room, accompanied by the distant music of prayer bells in the hands of monks at worship in another wing of the house. We walked abreast, I in the middle, to the door of the Panchan's room; then Lo and Tsu fell back, standing in the doorway like statues.

Before me, on an overstuffed Grand Rapids sofa at the other end of the long room, sat the Panchan Lama. I hesitated a moment, uncertain of the proper etiquette. The pontiff decided things by rising from his seat and advancing toward me. I could do no less than go to meet him, and we shook hands in the middle of the room.

Tsu told me afterwards that it was the first time he had ever seen the Panchan shake hands "in the foreign manner." The customary salute was a deep obeisance by the visitor, and a touching of the guest's forehead by His Serenity.

The Panchan was stockily built, a little shorter in height than I—and as I am five feet eight, he is probably about five feet six. His face was swarthy, rather darker than the typical Chinese face, darker than Shia but not quite as dark as Liu and Lo. He had a drooping moustache, jet black, over a mouth

which was strong, but smiled easily. His hair was close-cropped, of a shade I would call salt-and-pepper, above a forehead both broad and high.

He had a well-formed, high-bridged nose, and eyes unusually deep-set, black and lively. His broad face was lined with a hundred ridges and wrinkles, but the tissues beneath them were so firm and muscular that the general effect was that of a smooth and rather youthful countenance, at least for a man of fifty-five.

His dress was a loose plum-coloured robe, crossed in front of the body in kimono style, and reaching from neck to feet. The robe was sleeveless, and his bare arms came out from under the padded felt shoulders of his under-garment in surprising rolls of muscle, like the arms of a discus-thrower. The under-garment, which was visible for an inch or so at his neck, was faced in crimson silk, brocaded in gold; and the same embroidery covered the top of his heavy felt Tibetan shoes, which pointed upward above their broad toes.

The Panchan's handshake was followed by his throwing over my shoulders a blue silk *hata*, the sacred scarf of Lamaism. This was mine to keep, a token of his favour and a symbol of his prayers for my long life and happiness. It was accompanied by a few swift words of greeting, which I acknowledged with a bow.

With a gesture he led me to the sofa, where he seated me on his right hand. Tsu and Lo joined us, standing stiffly at attention and acting as interpreters. The Panchan spoke in Tibetan, rapidly and in a voice so low that it was hardly more than a whisper. I could not understand a word of it, and I am sure that Lo translated more by lip reading than by actually hearing the quick phrases.

His first words were a reference to the "excellent reports" he had received about me from his advisers. He thanked me for being helpful to them, and expressed the hope that the friendship thus so happily begun would "endure forever."

I replied that it had been a pleasure to serve them—and him. That what I had done had been nothing. That my only regret was that I had not found occasion to do more.

This routine of politeness having been completed, the Panchan turned to more particular matters. He had been

much interested to learn of my long residence on the Indian frontier of Tibet. He himself remembered with much pleasure his sojourn in India, where he had seen many new things and learned much about the world.

I told him that I, too, remembered his Indian visit, that I had followed it closely from my home in Almorah, that on one occasion I had waited in a crowd at an Indian railway station in hope of seeing him.

Encouraged by his attentive attitude, I went on to tell him of my *chela-guru* relationship with Chanti, one of his compatriots. He showed no desire to interrupt me until I made a complimentary reference to the natural wealth of Tibet—the gold fields of Gartok, the turquoises and garnets of Rungma, the musk of Tokjalung.

Then, with a smile of appreciation, he said: "Yes, there is great wealth in my country, but it is undeveloped. And my people have much to learn."

I was surprised to find myself completely at my ease, as we went on with our discussion. I had expected a greater austerity in the pontiff and was unprepared for the genial warmth and magnetism of his personality.

Meanwhile Tsu and Lo continued to stand like ramrods. Every time the Panchan used the first person pronoun, every time I addressed him, every time he was referred to in their translations, the pair of them bowed stiffly, reverently, from the waist.

He turned the conversation on America, to which he paid a flowery and comprehensive tribute. He hoped for help from America, he said, in developing his country—Americans, he was sure, would be more disinterested and effective than any other foreigners.

I expressed a polite hope that some day he would visit America, and he answered with obviously genuine feeling that nothing would please him more.

We talked about aviation and he asked me several keen questions as to the possible use of aeroplanes in Tibet—for communication, for police duty, for trade. I explained to him some of the difficulties of flying at high altitudes, some of the elaborate preparations that would be necessary before aviation on any extensive scale would be possible in Tibet.

He had seen some of my Corsairs, on the ground and in

flight, around Nanking, and he asked me if I could send him photographs of these and other types of aeroplanes.

I said I would be glad to send him as many as he wanted.

"Don't send them," he said, with a smile, "but bring them when next you come, and we will look at them together."

It was his first intimation that I would be invited for another audience. It was convincing evidence that his friendly attitude toward me was more than mere politeness. I was both surprised and flattered, although a little puzzled to account for it.

Our conversation had lasted nearly a half-hour, and I began to feel uneasy lest I was imposing unduly on his good nature. I made a move to rise, but he put his hand on my forearm, and said:

"Just a moment—there is one other thing I want to say to you." He paused and waited for Lo to translate. Then he went on:

"I have many problems in which, if you will be so good, I shall perhaps wish your thoughts and advice." Pointing to Tsu, he continued: "All my plans are known to Tsu, and I give him my full authority to discuss them with you."

I was again too surprised to do anything but bow in acknowledgment of his significant words.

He turned to Tsu, and made some remark which I realized was not for me. But it seemed to please Tsu very much—for he fairly beamed under the rigid mask of courtly dignity which he had worn throughout the interview.

The Panchan escorted me across the room, and shook hands again warmly at the door. Tsu hurried me down the corridors to Lo's room—he had the air of a small boy bursting with important news.

It was here, in Lo's room, with two lion dogs listening from their throne on another straight-backed chair from Grand Rapids, that Tsu told me how he and his friends had been commissioned to seek in Shanghai a reliable American to act as personal adviser to the Panchan Lama, particularly in reference to aviation and transport. How they had selected me and had brought me to Nanking so that the pontiff could look me over and judge for himself.

The Panchan's last remark to Tsu, which had brought a

gleam of pleasure to the envoy's eyes, was that he fully approved the choice they had made.

Tsu's feeling was that he had been charged with a highly important mission and had carried it out to his master's satisfaction.

GUARDIAN OF THE TEMPLE

(Illustration facing page 256)

Demonology more ancient than history is the foundation of Lamaism. Every bit of bad luck that has happened or can happen to a Tibetan has been personified in a demon. There are literally thousands of these mysterious beings, all enemies of man except eight devils who have been "converted" and are now allies of the gods in the Tibetan pantheon. These good demons are pictured in the outer room of every temple, guarding the doors against their evil brethren. . . . This particular guardian is carved of wood, covered with plaster and hideously painted in brick red and a sickly blue. He carries the seal of the Panchan Lama, which is seen above the first and third skulls in his head-dress and also above the skull resting on his left forearm. . . . He has three eyes and four arms, and in the horizontal left hand he holds a libation cup made from half of an actual human skull.

A BELLE OF THE GOLD COUNTRY

(Illustration facing page 257)

This young Tibetan woman is cosmopolitan in her tastes; the prominent piece of jewellery at her neck is Nepalese and known as the "star within a star"; her gown is of rich Chinese silk; her hat is Tibetan, embroidered in spun gold from Gartok; her necklace is Russian. The multiple star is made from carved white Yunnan jade, surrounding a mosaic of Tibetan turquoise and Caspian coral, the whole set in Litang silver. The crown of the hat is of yak-wool felt, its brim is Koko Nor lynx.





CHAPTER SIX

A NEW HEART FOR ASIA

Fools always have a foolish fear
That what they say may not be clear.
Their passion to be understood
Has never done them any good.
The more you understand a man
The more you know his every plan.
Wise are the men who know the way
To wrap in fog the things they say.

—*Kanjur Commentaries*

IT was ten days later that Tsu arrived in Shanghai to discuss all the "plans" which the Panchan had ordered him to lay before me.

Evidence of the unique position into which I had been thrust so suddenly came when, with impressive formality, Tsu placed in my hands an oblong envelope of the peculiar chalky whiteness always identified with the heavy hand-made rice paper used in Chinese official correspondence.

I opened the envelope and unfolded the document within. It was a sheet of thick paper, of the same material as the envelope, about 18 x 24 inches. Inside its wide white borders was a solid 12-inch square of sacred lama yellow outlined in gold, black and red, with a lotus-throned Buddha engraved at the top. On the yellow surface, in large Chinese lettering, running from right to left, vertically, was a formal message, addressed "to whom it may concern." In the bottom left-hand corner were two seals—the Great Seal of Tibet and Mongolia, which was a huge square of red more than four inches on each side, and beside it the Panchan's personal emblem, a smaller square of red inscribed in Sanskrit and Mongol characters.

I looked uncomprehendingly at the impressive hand-brushed hieroglyphics. The only words I could read, at first glance, were those which represented my name. I looked inquiringly at Tsu.

"That," he said reverently, "is the Passport to Heaven—now issued for the first time to a foreigner!"

He paused for me to get the significance of his words.

"But what does it mean?" I asked impetuously.

"It admits you, at any time, under any circumstances, to the immediate presence of His Serenity—or to any of his subordinates—or to any of his territories."

My face apparently indicated that I had not yet caught the full meaning of his speech. Tsu decided that he must explain in more elementary fashion.

"You have told me how, long ago, you entered into the *chela-guru* relationship with a Tibetan wise man named Chanti, in India. . . . This document establishes the same relationship between you and the greatest incarnation in Lamaism. . . . It gives you the official title of 'Councillor' and member of the National Assembly: your position is higher than Viceroy, and only less important than *sha-pe*."

Tsu's manner showed clearly that my elevation to official status was approximately that of a British commoner suddenly raised, not merely to a baronetcy, but to the highest position in the peerage.

Tsu and I conferred for a solid week over the "plans" which the Panchan wanted me to know.

As a background for our discussions, Tsu informed me that the Chinese Government had invited the pontiff to Nanking in order to reward him for his miraculous halting of the Japanese advance. Their first act was to grant him numerous new titles. Next they had given him a permanent State subsidy of \$40,000 a month. Lastly they had invited him to suggest anything else that could be done to increase the effectiveness of his rule and to bind closer to China its outlying Mongolian and Tibetan dependencies.

The Chinese leaders undoubtedly expected to be asked for important political concessions, such as membership on the Supreme Council, a free hand in building up his own personal power, authorization to proceed against the recalcitrant Dalai Lama in Tibet, establishment of a powerful military force and the revenue from a definite taxation area to support his plans.

Their minds were fixed mainly on the Lhasa situation, which had given them plenty of cause for uneasiness. For a long time now the Dalai and his Young Tibetans had been

openly hostile to China, and a state of guerilla warfare along the frontiers had become the rule.

But they were reluctant to precipitate another civil war, or to deflect even the smallest fraction of their own insufficient military resources toward any dubious Tibetan adventure. They feared that the Panchan's effectiveness against the Japanese would be completely destroyed if he turned his attention from Mongolia to his native uplands 1500 miles away.

Yet they felt that they would have to yield to the Panchan's wishes, whatever these might be. It was an anxious group of Chinese leaders who faced the protracted series of conferences which had been arranged—for none of them could conceive of a man whose chief wish would not be to get back for himself the great power which was his by right.

The Panchan's thinking was along entirely different lines.

While Nanking viewed every problem nationalistically and in terms of guarding, stabilizing and augmenting the power of China, the Grand Lama saw rather the picture of all Asia, with particular reference to the Lamaist country which extended from Siberia to India and from Persia to the Pacific.

China's perplexities were but a small part of the problem he was considering.

All the matters which the Chinese leaders had prepared to discuss at great length with His Serenity, and on which they had devoted weeks of preparation and study, were brushed aside by the Panchan in the first formal conference.

Membership on the Supreme Council he declined, saying he was not ready for it at this time. A free hand in building up his own personal power, when suggested hesitatingly and diplomatically by a Chinese delegate, he dismissed with a polite smile—for that was a dignity Lamaism had long since bestowed upon him, which China could neither give to him nor take from him.

As for the establishment of a powerful military force, he would have none of it. Nor did he want the powers of taxation, for his plans anticipated no immediate large-scale expenditures.

When it came to the discussion of Lhasa and the Dalai Lama, the Panchan again surprised his anxious hosts. The last thing in the world that he sought was any armed effort to oust his rival. Unaccountably to the Chinese, he seemed to regard Lhasa as a secondary matter, one that could wait its turn. He

had a suggestion to make, however—that a peace mission be sent to Lhasa in a calm and dispassionate effort to effect a reconciliation or a working basis.

This was promptly agreed to by the Chinese, who began nominating some of their generals and diplomats as members of the mission. The Panchan listened patiently to their suggestions, then good-naturedly called their attention to the fact that he had asked for a "peace" mission. He repeated the words "peace mission" several times, until the Chinese realized that perhaps it would be better to ask him what sort of personnel he would recommend.

"I think," said the Panchan deliberately, "that the head of the mission should be a religious figure, rather than a political or military one. And perhaps he could be allowed to select his own subordinates. . . ."

The religious "figure" whom he presently nominated was the fourth incarnation in the hierarchy, a Mongolian pontiff known as the Anching Hutuketu, namely, the celebrated head of Lamaism at Anching. The Panchan explained that this personage had long since taken over many of the duties and responsibilities of Prince Dilowa, the Urgan Hutuketu.

At the naming of this figure, the Chinese delegates around the table looked questioningly at each other, and then at the imperturbable Panchan. None of them had ever heard of the Anching pontiff.

"He is now at Peilingmiao, looking after my interests," added the Panchan. "For your information, I may say that he had a large part in handling the Japanese situation and is possessed of great tact in diplomacy. He is a man of more than threescore years, and has been on good terms with the Dalai Lama for half of that time. . . . I will send him to you, and you can judge for yourselves."

So it was arranged. All the matters which the Chinese had envisaged as requiring a long series of conferences had been settled at the first meeting.

The Panchan had practically taken charge of the proceedings, promptly offering a satisfactory solution to every question brought up. The Chinese were so pleased with this unexpected turn of affairs that they broke all precedents by enthusiastically offering to pay all the expenses of the proposed mission to Lhasa.

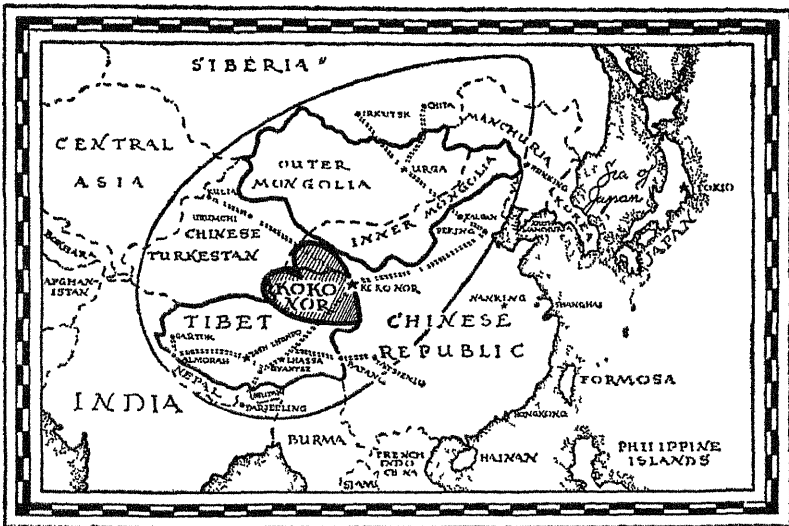
It looked to the Nanking delegates as if no further meetings

would be necessary, and they were prepared to adjourn on this basis when the Panchan sprang another surprise.

He started to make a speech which the Chinese regarded as a sort of perfunctory benediction and leave-taking, opening with compliments on the very agreeable way in which matters had progressed. But when he had done with these courtesies he branched off in an unexpected direction.

"Now that we have finished with these minor subjects," he said, "I wish to announce that at our next session I shall bring before you some really important proposals. I think they will meet with your approval. But I trust that you will allot sufficient time to give them full and due consideration."

The startled Chinese officials suggested that he give them some inkling as to the nature of the proposals, so that before



In a few neat strokes the Panchan Lama outlined in heavy black the boundaries of Tibet; then the boundaries of Mongolia. With a lighter line, he indicated the much larger limits of the egg-shaped territories of Lamaism. Finally, with a line twice as broad as any he had previously employed, he drew the province of Koko Nor, between Tibet and Mongolia. Nobody had ever before noticed that Koko Nor is shaped exactly like a human heart, with its apex pointed toward China. Here the great trans-Asiatic caravan routes cross, and at their intersection the Panchan proposed to establish the new capital of a Central Asian Empire. Here to-day is the new town of Koko Nor, the "City of the Panchan Lama."

the next meeting they could prepare themselves by study. But the Panchan, looking benignly around the room, replied that he was not ready to say anything more at this time. The Chinese delegates went away, whispering among themselves. Here was a man who was a true enigma: he had seemed at the first meeting to want nothing for himself, but perhaps he was merely laying the foundation for demands far more extravagant than anything they had anticipated.

At the next session, the Panchan Lama appeared with a large roll of paper under his arm. He went into the council chamber in advance of the others, and when the apprehensive Chinese delegates came tiptoeing in, he was seated at the head of the table, with the mysterious long roll laid impressively in front of him. Lo was the only person in Nanking who knew what it was—and he knew only because he had noticed that a large map of Asia had disappeared from the wall of his sitting-room.

The Panchan opened his address to the delegates in genial mood, with a general review of the geographical distribution of his Lamaist followers in Asia. He pointed out that the country took the form of a great ellipse, an egg-shaped territory comprising almost half the total area of Asia, its axis running diagonally across the continent from India to Manchuria. The base of the egg was Tibet; the top was Mongolia.

"Now I desire to point out to you," he said earnestly, "that heretofore, for a thousand years, Lamaism has been governed from the base of the egg—its spiritual head at Tashilhunpo, its temporal head at Lhasa."

He permitted himself a long and impressive silence, then went on:

"The situation has now changed, as I shall show you. My followers are threatened on the north by an ambitious and war-like aggressor. The base of the egg is too far away to deal with the questions that arise.

"This is a problem that has given me much anxiety, and now I am looking to China to help me solve it."

He took up the mysterious roll, and hung the huge map of Asia on the wall behind him, beneath a crayon portrait of Sun Yat-sen.

With deliberate showmanship he called for ink and brushes. He went through the rite of mixing the solid ink with water, in

the Chinese manner, rubbing the dampened end of the ink-stick on the stone surface of the pen stand. Then he took up one of the bamboo brushes from its brass cornucopia, twirled it expertly in the ink to bring it to a point and turned to the map.

In a few neat strokes he outlined in heavy black the boundaries of Tibet; then the boundaries of Mongolia. With a lighter line he indicated the much larger limits of the egg-shaped territories of Lamaism, embracing parts of Turkestan, China and Manchuria.

He turned now to his audience and made sure that the picture he had drawn was clearly understood.

"From one end to the other of the egg," he explained, "is one hundred and eighty days' march. The breadth of the egg is one hundred days.

"But I would especially call your attention to the fact that between Tibet at the base of the egg and Mongolia at the top of the egg lies the Chinese province of Chinghai—or, as we Tibetans call it, Koko Nor.

"With the pressure of war on the top of the egg, and the shifting of our attention from the Tibetan base to the Mongolian top, the importance of Koko Nor suddenly becomes enormous.

"Neither you nor I have ever paid much attention heretofore to Koko Nor. It is sparsely populated and inaccessible, visited only by nomad shepherds, salt gatherers and gold washers.

"But I beg your indulgence now for a few minutes, while we look at this province of Koko Nor with a careful eye."

He took a new brush, inked it generously, and then proceeded to use a line twice as broad as any which he had previously employed. He traced Koko Nor with such bold black strokes that it stood out in unmistakable relief, precisely in the centre of Asia.

Without doing any violence to the actual geographical boundaries of Koko Nor, he had outlined a human heart.

He did not have to point out this coincidence to his spell-bound audience. All around the table, the Chinese showed it to one another, with many expressions of amazement and delight.

The Panchan, highly pleased and smiling, went on with his address.

"You have already noted, I see, that the shape of Koko Nor is that of a heart. It is the heart of the Lamaist world. But have you noted a still more significant fact—that its apex points toward China? A symbol, gentlemen, of the attachments and loyalties of my people.

"My proposal to-day, to you, is that we shall turn this symbol into reality."

This was the basis on which the Panchan laid out the plan for which he sought Chinese support and approval—the establishment of the new Lamaist capital in Koko Nor, at the spot where the north-and-south caravan routes crossed those of the east and west.

Here he would be able to keep his fingers on the pulse of the Mongolian situation, which would have been impossible from either Lhasa or Tashilhunpo.

The logic of his argument was so sound, and the completely new idea which he suggested was so convincing, that the Chinese delegates around the council table promptly and unanimously approved his plan. Within a few days the new town of Koko Nor, as capital of the province of Koko Nor, had the full official approval of the Chinese government, and a staff of government engineers was assigned to assist in the laying out and construction of "the city of the Panchan Lama."

These were the plans which Tsu brought before me in Shanghai. The Panchan sought my advice and counsel not so much on the immediate problems with which the government engineers were engaged—but rather on the ultimate future of his plans for Koko Nor, Tibet and Mongolia.

Once I had fully digested the things which had been approved and were under way, he wanted me to look forward to methods of bringing his new capital into touch with the upper and lower parts of the Lamaistic egg, and also with the outside world.

Communication—easy, swift and modern—that was the Panchan's idea for a country where fourteen miles a day was a long march. Trade—the exchange of the wealth of Tibet for the amenities of civilization—that was his purpose for a land where an electric bulb was almost unknown. These were his two main planks in a platform which embraced peace, education and a strengthening of religious loyalties.

Communications and trade were the subjects on which I

was asked to help. As to communications, the Panchan wanted definite advice as to the type of roads which should be built, the kind of machinery which could be economically and effectively used for them, what centres they should link and what products would be carried between various points. I was to consider also the type of vehicles which might be used, whether motor transport on any large scale was feasible, whether petrol could ever be economically brought to distributing points. There were also questions of administration, the policing of roads, provision for the shelter and care of travellers.

Another question for study was railways. Should Tibet aim ultimately at creating some link with existing railways, the nearest of which were hundreds of miles from her boundaries?

Most of all, however, the Panchan was interested in aeroplane transport. He perceived that in China the history of Western transportation was reversed—the aeroplane as a common carrier came to many parts of China ahead of the motor road and the railway. Even to-day regular aeroplane service reaches many towns in China which are still completely inaccessible by road or rail. This he thought would also be the history of transportation in Tibet.

He wanted his hazy ideas about aeroplanes examined in the light of my experience. What were the practical possibilities? What types of planes could be used? How much freight, how many passengers, would they carry? Where would they land, and how refuel? What facilities must be provided? What would it cost to make a beginning?

I went into all these questions in great detail with Tsu, and later with the Panchan himself at frequent intervals. We looked at aeroplane pictures together; we studied the Chinese engineers' plans for a landing field at Koko Nor, the first to be constructed in Tibet. We pored over maps and measured distances, translating them into hours of flight and gallons of petrol. Pay loads were investigated, and the products of Tibet mentally weighed and re-weighed for bulk and value. Only four products of Tibet could be made to pay their air freight—gold, musk, semi-precious stones and furs. But the available quantities of these in Tibet were so great that it was obvious a regular service could eventually be made profitable.

After three months of these meetings, both Tsu and the Panchan felt that they had adequate data for their immediate

needs. Tsu left for Koko Nor to inspect the work already begun, and to collect a great deal of accurate information that was needed. The Panchan left for Peilingmiao, to meet and discuss the forthcoming peace mission with the Anching Hutuketu.

For six months I had spent fully half my time with my Tibetan friends, in Nanking and Shanghai. I had been rewarded by a paper Passport to Heaven, elevation to the upper house of the National Assembly and an assortment of "presents" that ranged from handbags and rugs to bronze buddhas and silk scarves. My Shanghai apartment on Avenue Joffre had been turned into a rendezvous of Tibetans, some of whom were too abundantly anointed with yak butter to make them sweet-smelling companions under the influence of cocktails and steam heat.

So far as I was concerned, it was all worth while, as a contribution to my lifelong interest in Tibet. But my wife, who had to work out the domestic economy and make ends meet, began to weary of a "hobby" which took up so much of my time with so little prospect of return. My answer to her objections was that, as an aeroplane salesman, I was at work on a client who would eventually prove very profitable. I was not sure just how or where that profit would come, but I somehow had confidence that the Panchan Lama would fit me into his plans in a way which would repay me for my disinterested service.

This much I must say for my wife—she took my assurances at their face value, and did everything possible to make my Tibetan friends happy, comfortable and at ease.

She found much about them that was amusing, and she enjoyed practising her Chinese vocabulary on them. When they brought their Chinese friends to the house, as they often did, there were ladies to be entertained, and the routine programme for them was to adjourn to her boudoir and lay out for inspection her entire wardrobe—dresses, lingerie and knick-knacks. These would be discussed endlessly; the price of each article would be asked, and the Chinese ladies would try on some of the garments, admiring themselves in the long mirror.

My Tibetan friends never came to the apartment for a formal call or meal without bringing a gift of some kind for

Mrs. Enders. Frequently the gift would be designated, on an accompanying card, as a personal remembrance from the Panchan Lama.

The meals for these guests had to be specially planned, in order to meet their somewhat elementary skill with knife and fork. Roast beef, for instance, was difficult for them when it was served in slices—it was better to cut it up into pieces which could be handled with the fork alone. They preferred stew, heavily spiced, to roasts or fowl, and pork pleased them better than more expensive meats.

Mrs. Enders found out their preferences, too, in beverages, and provided an ample supply of ruddy claret, pale Shanghai ale, *crème de menthe*, whisky-soda, and the materials for constant replenishment of the two-quart cocktail-shaker. They loved her coffee, and drank it without stopping, all the time they were in the house—six or seven successive cups at a sitting.

The grocer's bills alarmed her, and despite the fact that she liked these people, she undoubtedly felt that the investment in entertaining them was a pretty heavy one. I tried to reassure her by telling her that this was my hobby, and probably a less expensive one than golf, horse racing or hunting.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PLANS FOR AN EMPIRE

They tell of Chumbo who aspired
One day as mail-man to be hired.
To prove that he could make the run¹
He vowed that trotting he would shun
And do his eight miles in a dash
So rapid he would surely smash
All records for the distance. Well,
He sprinted for a mile and fell
Exhausted by the roadside, where
He lay and panted hard for air.
Next day he learned there was no need
For mail-men who made too much speed.

—*Gariok Fable*

NEVERTHELESS, there was a real basis for my wife's misgivings. With feminine intuition she had detected a gradual change in me. I was becoming less and less an aeroplane salesman, more and more a *chela* of the Panchan Lama. My thinking was no longer that of an outsider, but rather that which befitted my new station as the only foreign member of the upper house of the Tibetan National Assembly.

The transition was an easy one for me. My new mental attitude had its basis in my boyhood training under Jowar and Chanti—especially Chanti, whose steadfast loyalties to his native land and whose ideals of a Central Asian Empire had impressed me more deeply than I had realized.

Immediately after my first meeting with the Panchan, I had written a long letter to Chanti, mailing it in care of Jowar, who was now an old man in charge of the dairy at the Charleyville Hotel. My letter crossed one from Jowar, bringing the sad news of Chanti's death. He had retired from service some years before, but had continued living in his house at Almorah. Old

¹ Mail-runner stations in Tibet are four miles apart. On the morning a courier runs from his own to the next station ; and runs back in the afternoon.

age comes quickly upon the Tibetan, and Chanti's active life had burned him out. For the past two years he had been growing feeble of mind and body. The end came quietly upon him as he dozed among his pillows on the dais of his reception room.

It was something of a shock to me to think that long before the letter reached me, the Lamaist priests had carried the sheeted body of my beloved *guru* to the rocky knoll beyond the caravanserai, and there had dismembered his remains with their long thin knives, throwing the fragments to the dogs and vultures. This, in orthodox Tibetan belief, is the fitting way of returning man's body to the five primal elements from which it came.

I was sorry that Chanti could not have lived to know about my meetings with the Panchan Lama, about his gift to me of the Passport to Heaven, about my elevation to membership in the National Assembly. Chanti had been the cause and inspiration of all that had come to me, and nothing would have delighted him more than to have told me, in his grave way, that I now had a really great *guru* to follow.

It would have been pleasant to have one more meeting with him and Jowar around the fires of the caravanserai. Jowar would have argued at great length, I am sure, that things were not what they used to be. Chanti would have taken the opposite view, and insisted that progress was visible everywhere. He would have deplored the Soviet crusade against Lamaism and the Japanese encroachments in Asia, but he would have seen eventual good coming out of it all.

News of his death set me thinking, in a somewhat detached way, of the whole background and purpose of my connection with Tibet. I happened to have a month of comparative idleness, which I devoted with sudden zeal to new Tibetan studies. I haunted the Shanghai Library of the Royal Asiatic Society and dug my way through many a musty volume that had not been disturbed for years. I made elaborate notes on religion, politics and customs. I familiarized myself with all the available maps, geologic data, weather lore. I calculated distances, altitudes and the effects of wind, snow and rain on transport problems. I surrounded myself with charts and diagrams.

Just what purpose I sought in all this activity I hardly knew. But as the work went on I saw that I was putting together the

picture of an empire. It was the Central Asian Empire of which Chanti had dreamed, and which now seemed to be the centre of the Panchan's thinking, with its heart in Koko Nor.

Was the Panchan's vision mainly of a spiritual empire? Or was he shifting his emphasis definitely to temporal power?

This question puzzled me greatly. Perhaps there could be no clear-cut answer. A theocracy like Tibet is something of a paradox in the present-day world. If the Panchan and Dalai lamas could be brought together in a common policy, then apparently the vision of a Central Asian Empire would become *both* temporal and spiritual.

But why was the Panchan Lama talking about transportation, aeroplanes, roads and a new capital? Surely these things were not the concern of a spiritual ruler—they were the responsibility of the Dalai Lama.

I came to the conclusion that the Panchan's interest in these matters was solely for the purpose of giving his recommendations to the Dalai, and that he was confident of effecting a complete reconciliation with the Lhasa pontiff, through the peace mission that had already been arranged.

The policies to be adopted in rebuilding the power of Tibet were intricate, because for the first time in history they involved the establishment of relationships with the outside world. It was essential, in the Panchan's thinking, that these relationships should be peaceful, that they should somehow bring to Tibet a higher standard of living, but without any exploitation of his followers or any loss of independence.

Would it be better to build, without outside help, on the foundation of spiritual influence, of the kind which had temporarily halted Japan's aggressions in Mongolia? Or might it be better to lean heavily upon China, Tibet's historic ally?

The latter way would be easier, but would it give results? And might it not involve Tibet in an alliance which would eventually prove costly and embarrassing? If China got into difficulties, would Tibet's resources in men and treasure be thrown upon the barricades to avert Chinese disaster?

The Panchan's answer was to preserve as much as possible of Tibetan independence, and to accept aid only when it was offered without obligations.

Every proposal submitted to him must be considered and

studied from this viewpoint—not merely what benefits would ensue, but what future complications might be involved, particularly of an international nature.

A plan for aeroplane transport, for instance, must include a consideration of how it would be viewed by China, Japan, Russia and Great Britain. Tibet is completely landlocked, and so far removed from the terminals of transport that any plane entering it must use the airways and bases of another nation. Would the Panchan Lama officially wish Tibet to take responsibility for the unpredictable international complications that might ensue? Or would it be better to avoid entanglements by leaving the matter in the hands of private initiative?

And, of course, there hung over all the Panchan's discussion of plans and proposals the fact that he was still only a spiritual ruler, and an exile from his country. Such decisions as he might reach were for the future—a future which might never materialize.

If an aeroplane service to Koko Nor were established, there were still plenty of questions to be answered. Not merely the attitude of China and Japan toward it, but also the reception it would receive from the Lhasa government. Would the arrival of a Panchan-inspired aeroplane defeat his desire for peace with Lhasa and among his followers; would it precipitate the civil war which he had made so many sacrifices to avoid?

Then, too, what would be the attitude of the monasteries which were the depositories of the country's gold and musk? These monasteries had to live under the tyranny of the Young Tibetan party, and they might hesitate to deliver their treasure to the new mode of transportation if this seemed likely to threaten the existing political system.

It seemed to me that the Panchan would feel the need of moving slowly in such matters. He would like to see the plans and blue-prints outlined as clearly as possible, but when it came to putting them into effect, he would be cautiously guided by circumstances and by many factors outside the margins of the blue-prints.

This line of reasoning applied to many enterprises besides the one in which I was immediately interested. It applied to the slowly progressing buildings on the plain of Koko Nor. The projected new capital would not rise rapidly; its ruler

RAPID TRANSIT ON THE BARKING DEER TRAIL

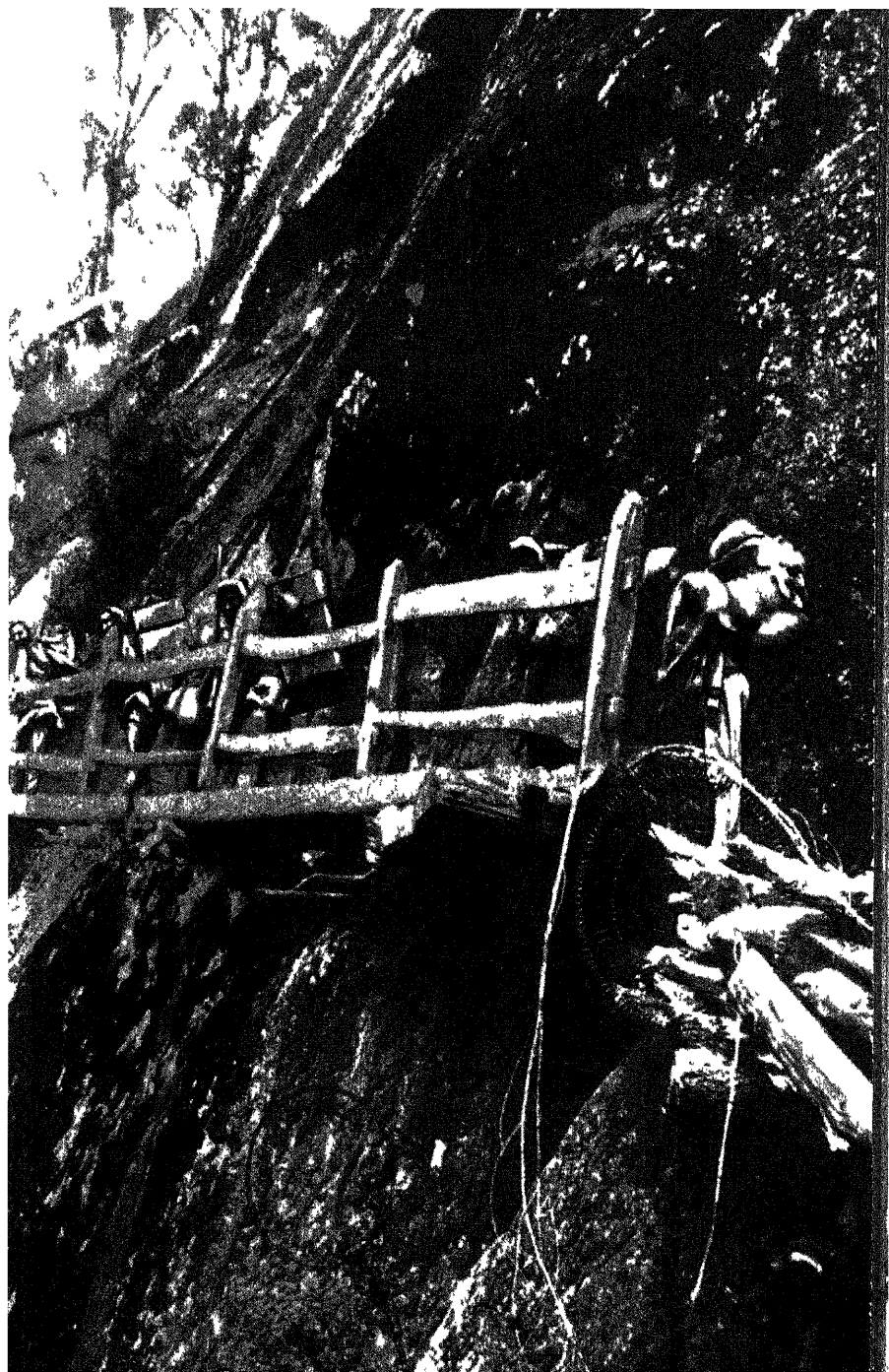
(Illustration facing page 272)

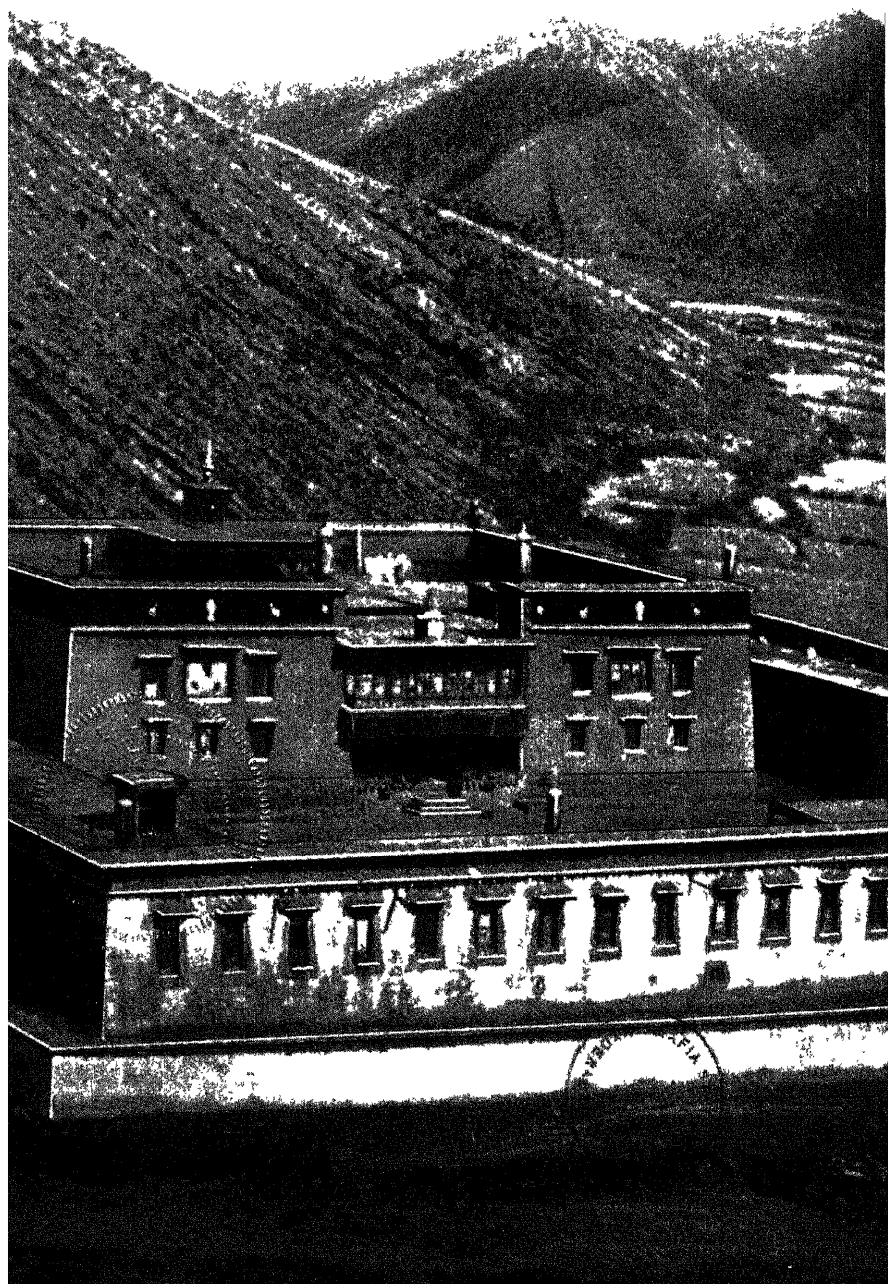
Roads like this indicate why coolie transport is still largely used for heavy hauling among the Tibetan trails. The lichen-covered rock offers no support for a roadway: a crude wooden shelf—known to the Tibetans as a *trang*—has been put into place with a minimum of rock cutting. Camel caravans cannot cope with such roads, but yaks, mules and ponies are sometimes used. The coolie, human beast of burden, is perhaps most efficient. He carries a load averaging 150 pounds, covers more muleage than a yak, and is quite as sure-footed as a mule. Many of these *trangs* overhang sheer precipices hundreds of feet high.

GOLDEN MONASTERY OF GARTOK

(Illustration facing page 273)

Here, at the edge of the best-known gold fields in Tibet, is the fortified monastery which is the clearing house for the gold of Gartok. It is located in a fertile valley, surrounded by steep and forbidding mountains. The five pinnacles on the roof of the central building are covered with a plating of solid yellow gold. It is a festival time, for the upper border of the wall is draped with the dark red yak-wool draperies which indicate a special occasion, and the same sort of gold-embroidered curtains are hanging as a valance over the portico of the main entrance. The roof, too, is surmounted by a pavilion draped in yak-wool curtains, where the local incarnation will hold court during the ceremonies. The wall surrounding the courtyard is a two-storied affair, providing quarters for monks on the second floor and an open gallery below for gold washers and visiting caravans. During the past eight centuries, many millions of dollars' worth of gold³ must have cleared through this building.





would feel his way carefully, prepared to go ahead only as fast as his activities led into no difficulties.

The Panchan was not too vigorous in pushing Nanking's offer of support. He let his demands remain modest, content to work with what was freely offered for the support of his headquarters staff and retinue.

No doubt the pontiff's financial situation was somewhat precarious. He had a reserve in the Shanghai banks, but it was a dwindling one. His position now demanded expenditures on a scale greater than ever before. His retinue consisted of more than two hundred persons, who must be housed and fed and clothed in a manner befitting the recognition he had lately received from the Nanking Government. Curtailment of expense was out of the question. In Oriental eyes, any attempt to turn off loyal followers who had shared exile with their master was unpardonable. Moreover, the cutting down of his staff at the moment when the international tide had begun to turn in his favour would be ruinous to "face" and good standing.

If anything, there must be an increase in retinue and a more free-handed dispensing of money in travelling expense and in the ordinary largess of Oriental potentates.

As a realization of all these factors in the situation came to me, I ceased completely to be an aeroplane salesman who regarded the Panchan as a customer for his wares. I became a sincere and loyal member of his retinue, seeking to fortify his thinking with all the facts and information that might help him in his long-distance planning.

I sought to get definite facts about the gold resources of Tibet and was surprised to find how little accurate information existed. Faced with the definite objective of a transportation enterprise to bring this gold to market, I needed more than tales and hearsay. It was up to me to know exactly where the gold was, and in what quantities.

Statistics were non-existent, and the present export of gold from Tibet is by such devious routes that for the most part it never gets reported. The practical-minded Tsu, however, gave me this statement of his own as an inkling of what he believes the situation in Tibet:

"One-third of the adult population of my country are gold washers for at least part of the year. If one million Tibetans

work at this trade for even one month a year, and if you assume that their average pannings are half an ounce a day, what results have you? A total production of fifteen million ounces a year."

Tsu's statement would make Tibet the greatest gold field in the world, for the production he indicates is greater than that of South Africa, and more than three times the production of the United States and Canada combined.

I was quite sure that Tsu's statement was far beyond the facts. But if the production of Tibet is only one-tenth of what he indicated, it is still more than half that of the United States.

Statistics of gold are the most elusive of all figures. The present stock of gold in the world, including both governmental reserves and gold in jewellery and the arts, is well over 20 billion dollars. The United States alone has nearly half of this sum in its official gold reserves of coin and bullion.

Yet the statistics of gold mined in the past hundred years give no exact indication of where this world store came from. During the first fifty years of the nineteenth century, only 16 million dollars of gold were mined yearly. Then came the American gold rush of '49, and the next fifty years saw the annual world production rise to 300 million dollars. Now the new fields of South Africa and Australia made themselves felt, and an analysis of 1910 gold figures shows South Africa leading with an annual production of 178 millions; North America second with 133 millions; Australia third with 66 millions; Europe fourth with 40 millions, and Asia fifth with 28 millions.

Official statistics indicate that hundreds of millions of dollars in gold have filtered into circulation without being registered at source.

A large part of this unregistered production is Asiatic. This largest of all the continents has been a gold producer for more than two thousand years. Almost all the gold of ancient times came from Asia. And the gold-producing rivers of Asia, whether they be in China, Siberia, India or Asia Minor, have their sources in Tibet. The gold which they bear is Tibetan in origin, water-borne from the cliffs of the Himalayas.

The largest nugget of gold in history was picked up in a South African wagon rut in 1869. It was dubbed the

"Welcome Stranger" and weighed 2520 ounces. The largest nugget to come out of Tibet was found in the little kingdom of Muli, near Koko Nor, and weighed 525 ounces.

There is plenty of reason to believe, as Tsu has many times pointed out to me, that modern gold-mining operations in Tibet would bring to light many nuggets far surpassing the South African record. For it must be remembered that *nugget* gold never comes out of Tibet except by a bootlegging process which must evade one of the most ancient prejudices of Lamaism.

The priests hold that gold is a plant, of which the nuggets are the seed or root. The dust and spangles are the flower. Lest the annual harvest of gold should decrease, the priests lay down the strict rule that gold washers must return reverently to the soil every nugget which they unwittingly unearth. To disobey is both sacrilege and treason, punishable by death.

This ancient rule, Tsu believed, might be abrogated by the Grand Lamas whenever the time came for opening up Tibetan gold fields to modern exploitation. The abrogation would probably be gradual, starting perhaps with instructions to turn over all nuggets to the priests.

Export of gold from Tibet by aeroplane was, of course, only a small part of the Panchan's programme. His eyes were fixed upon a general betterment of the condition of his people. He had spoken to me of communications, easy, swift and modern; of trade, meaning the exchange of the small everyday goods of modern living; of education and peace and a strengthening of religious loyalties.

While aeroplane development occupied a prominent place in my mind, I gradually began to see it in its proper perspective. The pontiff was interested in planes, but only as he was interested also in automobiles and books and electric lights and other conveniences of the Western world.

I dared to hope that I would have a share, not merely in aviation, but also in his larger plans. If I could be more useful to him, at the beginning, as a purchaser of machinery and supplies or as a diplomatic go-between in negotiations with Western merchants or officials, I would be content. A share in the building of a Tibetan Empire appeared to me now as a career more enticing than the mere selling of aeroplanes.

What were the possibilities for the future of Tibet? What would Westernization do for the country? Could it ever become an efficient industrialized state?

These were the questions I asked myself. I tried to picture the development of sixty million horse-power of electrical energy from the mountain torrents. What could be done with it?

It seemed to me that, with proper leadership, Tibet under the new regime might resemble Switzerland—except that its area is thirty times as great, or even a hundred times as great if Mongolia is included. Electricity could bring light and heat and power to the towns and villages, eventually to most of the populated countryside. Good roads and electric railways would tie the country together and make possible a flow of trade, both in and out. Industrial development would be confined, in the early stages, to mining, tanning and the marketing of the products of the herds. Enormous salt deposits would be a profitable export, if cheap transportation became available. There were also nitrates for fertilizer and chemically important salts of sodium, potassium and magnesium. Cinnabar could be sent out for gold refining and for the production of mercury in all its forms. Electricity might be used for the manufacture of aluminium, for cement and for tiles and porcelains.

Above all, electricity would surely mean the modernization of the gold-mining industry on a broad basis.

Could Tibetans learn to operate the machines of the modern age? It would take a generation, perhaps, to educate them into skilled labour. But for the preliminary years of digging and heavy work they were surely well enough equipped.

The effect on Tibet of the mere opening of the country to unimpeded trade would be enormous. It would create opportunity for the youth of Tibet which certainly does not now exist.

Opportunity for youth? What would this mean in Tibet? It would be the greatest of all revolutions in the life of the lower orders. For to-day there is no outlet for an ambitious boy except the church. And entering the priesthood means little more than a stultifying repetition of endless *Om mani padme hums*. Worse still, it means celibacy, depriving the

nation of a potential father of many sons, and turning the virility of the country into unnatural channels.

As for the girls among Tibetan youth, their development is equally hampered. They can look forward to nothing except marriage or barren seclusion in a nunnery. Neither alternative is attractive to an alert-minded girl. The life of a wife in a hut is a hard one: she is a beast of burden as well as the provider of pleasure and the bearer of children for several husbands. Life in a nunnery is no better: there is little spiritual compensation for the negation of normal life, and the effect of the routine on the woman is subtly indicated by the fact that most of the Tibetan nuns develop voices of an oddly masculine timbre.

Can any mere mechanization of Tibet, through the introduction of the machinery of an industrialized civilization, change the ingrained habits of the people, their methods of thought, their oxlike acceptance of slavery to the priesthood? Would mechanization give them ambition and initiative? Would it teach the male peasant continence, or the woman the value of virtue?

For these are the things Tibet needs, more than a mere veneer of industrialized civilization.

As to the ingrained habits which must be changed, the most obvious one is filth. Standards of personal cleanliness are low; sanitation does not exist; every hut is infested with vermin; clothing is never changed and seldom washed; food is contaminated; filth diseases are unchecked; smallpox and syphilis are universal scourges. Habits of work are ill adapted to modern life: their agriculture is primitive; their handicraft is limited and they have little skill at it; they lack adaptability in the use of materials; they are as inept at the marketing of their products as they are at the ordinary domestic labours of the household; they are improvident in their own affairs and slipshod and unreliable in their relations with employers.

In methods of thought they are equally unready to meet an advancing civilization. They are superstitious and suspicious, unlettered and ignorant. They have no idea of community effort or group co-operation. The family is the only unit which they comprehend. Outside one's own family group, every man is a stranger and a potential enemy. Even in small village communities teamwork is unknown.

Their slavery to the priesthood is one of their handicaps.

Every hut is demon-ridden, and its only protection against the demons is the praying of the priests. No important function of living can be performed without the aid of the monastery. Tribute must be continually paid: the land belongs to the priesthood and the nobility, and the common people are merely tenant serfs who must make strict accounting for every kernel of barley. Out of the share allowed them they must still find means to pay for every special priestly ministration, such as those customary at births, weddings, illness and death. If occasionally there is still a surplus, the way to spend it is on fortune-telling, blessings and pilgrimages. Furthermore, the monastery is the community moneylender—a sort of pawnshop where crops and other individual enterprises must be financed. Rates of interest are highly usurious, two per cent a month being the usual charge, rigidly collected or compounded.

Would mechanization give these serfs ambition or initiative? Neither of these qualities has been permitted to develop among the Tibetan peasantry for the past thousand years. The youngster who wanders off to the gold fields and eagerly pans the yellow sands cannot keep his trove: it belongs to the monastery, and if he is so unlucky as to uncover a precious nugget he must promptly return it to the soil. The youth who devotes himself to the breeding of his yaks and gets a good result is penalized by the levying of an additional tax in yak butter. The young farmer who tills his soil more diligently than his neighbour is likely to be ordered to till a double acreage without any additional reward.

Would an advancing Western civilization bring with it any betterment of the moral status of family life among the peasants? Would promiscuity abate?

For this promiscuity is perhaps the greatest evil in Tibet and Mongolia. Polyandry is widely practised in the agricultural areas, and one woman may have as many as four husbands. On the other hand, polygamy is the rule among the nomads. The laxity of the marital ties is shown by the frequent "hat festivals" in Tibetan towns, at which there is absolute licence between men and women. And there are many parts of the Lamaistic empire, particularly among the nomadic populations, where it is customary for the host to give his guest his own place on the conjugal couch.

The Tibetan hat festivals are probably unique in the world

to-day. The merrymaking starts early in the morning, with the arrival in town of gold washers, herders, hunters and farmers from all the surrounding country. There is much eating and drinking, with open house for all comers at every mud hut in the village. But the main feature of the day is a continuous parade, in the streets, of men and women. The village women—and a certain number of women visitors—are attired in their finery, with turbanlike hats. The men look them all over, and eventually each man makes his choice. When he has chosen he walks boldly up to the woman he has selected and snatches her hat, tucking it securely into his loose coat. Then he tells her where he is staying for the night, and it is her duty to call at the address given, after dark, and redeem her property by sharing his bed. The festival fits in with some of the phallic features of Lamaism, and is essentially a dramatization of the rite of courtship and procreation. The woman who has redeemed her hat from some stranger at the local caravanserai will return to her own home the next morning without the slightest feeling of guilt or shame. She would only be ashamed if a festival passed without her being chosen by somebody.

Aside from the effects of these customs upon family life and the paternity of children, they have resulted in the universal spread of diseases which account for the prevalence of blindness, epilepsy, paralysis and insanity, constituting an enormous burden upon the people, who must somehow support an army of beggars, cripples and derelicts.

The loose sexual relationships in Tibet are undoubtedly due to the fact that there are no other pastimes or amusements available to the common people. Perhaps Western civilization could provide cinemas, theatres, sports, libraries and radios as substitutes. I am not at all sure that the Tibetans would take kindly toward the substitution.

This was the background of the Panchan Lama's problem. These were the people whose destinies he controlled. How far could he go with them, even if he had ample resources of money and leadership? Was he laying too much emphasis on the machinery of Western culture and too little on the need for education? Would not his people need at least a generation of preparation before they were ready for roads, aeroplanes and electricity?

Yet I could see certain elementary improvements that were immediately possible in Tibet. A few good trunk roads, criss-crossing the more densely populated centres and adequately policed, would bring a reliable postal service, banking facilities, and the means for a greatly improved commercial exchange of goods.

The Panchan, during his stay in Shanghai, had conferred with the directors of the Central Bank of China, whose functions in China correspond to those of the Bank of England in official British finance. He had laid before them a concrete plan for the establishment of branches throughout Tibet and Mongolia, with the first of these institutions to be opened immediately at Koko Nor and the second at Kanting, a city south of Koko Nor, which is a market centre for gold, hides, wool, salt and musk.

Here was a practical beginning to the Panchan's plans for a new Tibet—the development of Western banking, on a small scale, in the Panchan's own province at the heart of the proposed Central Asian Empire.

These two banks, I could see, would attract trade, and their credit facilities would stimulate the production of Koko Nor's natural resources. Then would come warehousing and the establishment of storage reservoirs of valuable cargoes which could eventually be handled by aeroplane and motor caravan. I could visualize the coming of the machine age to Tibet as a gradual process to which the people would be able to adapt themselves.

In the background of my mind was always Chanti and his belief that somehow I would have a hand in the future of Tibet. And, oddly enough, my interest went far beyond mere "things."

I came to have a keen desire for the survival of Lamaism—not the brand taught by ignorant monks, bent on ruling their followers through superstition and fear, but the essential doctrine as it had been explained to me by the Panchan Lama himself. This doctrine seemed to me to have much that was good, particularly for the peoples of Asia.

I never had any wish to see good Lamaists converted to Christianity. Stripped of superficialities, Lamaism has a quality of tolerance which most brands of Christianity seem to lack. It turns its back on the psychopathic horrors emphasized by many Western theologians. It asserts that

this earth is an imperfect place at best, and it goes on, with admirable justice, to affirm that whoever strays from the paths of duty and goodness will be sent back to earth as a man, again and again, until he achieves a reasonable devoutness. In the end there is Nirvana and eternal bliss for everyone who has ever drawn breath.

There is no hell, no eternal damnation, and no fire and brimstone in Lamaism. Its fundamental tenets give a man possession of his own soul, without any threat of later demanding it back and destroying it for ever and ever. These Lamaist articles of faith require no sermonizing, and they make strong appeal to all those who have no wish to snivel their way into paradise.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MEN, MACHINES AND FUNDS

Ambitious dreams need gold to feed them,
A poor man can't afford to heed them.
They cry for sustenance like babies
And shun such pap as ifs and maybes.
They only grow and thrive and mellow
On meals of Metal Bright and Yellow.

—*Proverbs of Tientsin Road*

IN preparation for the return of my Tibetan friends from their various errands in far away parts, I tried to work out exactly and precisely the plans for an aeroplane service between Tibet and Shanghai. I figured the costs of everything that would be needed, and the more I figured the more I became convinced that such a service could be made to pay, and pay handsomely.

There seemed to be no doubt that aeroplanes could bring out the four important exports of Tibet more cheaply than the ancient method of transport by pack mule, yak, camel or coolie.

Taking Lhasa as the principal trade centre, I calculated that 125 pounds of gold dust, transported by mule, took ninety days in getting to the Chinese border. The freight cost was only about \$160, but the risk of the road against bandits, robbers and accident was about one in four—in other words, a trader would have to allow about \$10,000 for “insurance.” The trip from the Chinese border to the vaults of a bank in Shanghai was already provided for by existing aeroplane routes, two and a half days, with an insurance and freight rate of about \$600 for one mule-load. The interest charge on the whole transaction for three months would be \$2500, this item being figured in Tibet at two per cent a month.

When all was totalled, Tibetan gold was coming into China at an overhead cost of more than \$100 a pound. An aeroplane service, carrying 1000 pounds per trip between Lhasa and

Shanghai, could obviously get all the business at a rate of \$20 or \$25 a pound.

The next question was, how much business was there, and was it sufficiently regular and dependable to warrant the capital outlay for a frequent service?

There were no figures. But it was obvious that for at least three months of the year the caravan routes were busy enough to provide plenty of occupation for aeroplanes. The other nine months, with the trails closed by weather, were another problem.

When Tsu and the Panchan Lama returned to Nanking, I went over my figures carefully with Tsu preparatory to presenting them to His Serenity. Tsu had got the building of the new city of Koko Nor well started—the levelling of the plain along the lake front, the building of roads, the foundations for a yamen, a barracks, a radio station and an electric power plant. He had also made several trips into the surrounding country, had visited Kumbum and many other monasteries, and had gathered a quantity of the trade data I had asked for.

Regarding the possibility of securing profitable aeroplane traffic during the nine months when caravan trails were closed, he gave me ample reassurance. The product of the immense gold fields around Koko Nor, he said, was concentrated in monasteries which would be accessible the whole year round, with a little planning. He was sure that the providing of a safe method of transport would stimulate gold production enormously. The same thing would apply to the trade in furs, musk and semi-precious stones.

An aeroplane service which supplied one round trip weekly, carrying an average of 1000 pounds pay-load on each trip, would mean 52,000 pounds, or 26 tons, of freight per year. Tsu was confident that this amount of the four important products could be easily obtained at Koko Nor alone, if safe and adequate storage facilities were established there. He named three other centres, beyond Koko Nor on a 600-mile circle, which could be depended on for equivalent amounts, under the same conditions of providing central storehouses.

Revising all my figures in accordance with Tsu's information, I prepared a comprehensive memorandum and presented it to the Panchan at my next interview.

I was still uncertain as to whether he would prefer an

aeroplane service to be operated under his direction, or as an independent commercial enterprise carrying freight to be sold for the benefit of the Panchan and his monasteries. There were arguments on both sides, and I expected to marshal these and place the question in his hands.

My viewpoint was strictly practical—there was a certain amount of available exportable natural wealth in Koko Nor and there was a certain way of getting it out efficiently and economically. So far as my memorandum was concerned, it was a job to be done, that was all—a job with certain risks, which I had allowed for; with certain costs, which I had calculated; with certain profits, which I felt would benefit Tibet. As to the operation of the planes, I already had in mind four expert American pilots and a group of experienced mechanics who could be hired. The type of machine I visualized was a modified passenger plane, single-engined, with extra fuel tanks—a plane which would always be heavily loaded and would require a skilful pilot in the dangerously high altitudes of Tibet.

My memorandum avoided any mention of political complications or other non-physical difficulties in connection with such a service. I prepared it, indeed, for the eye of the Dalai Lama, realizing that the setting in motion of the plan was dependent upon the anticipated reconciliation between the two incarnations, and that when this reconciliation was effected the Panchan would immediately submit his recommendations for Tibetan developments to the temporal ruler at Lhasa for action.

The peace mission was now nearing its destination, having travelled in great state through India, bearing such noble gifts and presents to the Dalai that he was certain to treat their arrival and message with the highest consideration. Nanking was confident of the mission's complete success, and even began planning for a friendly meeting of the two pontiffs.

The Dalai Lama was reported as somewhat feeble and greatly mellowed by the passing of the years. I felt that the youthfully-minded Panchan would have no difficulty in gaining mastery of the situation and bending the elder pontiff to his will.

In such a situation there was reason to believe that the actual inauguration of an experimental aeroplane service might

be only a matter of a few months. It was a picturesque sort of enterprise, which would presumably appeal to the Dalai, and if it was presented to China, Japan and the other powers as the joint enterprise of the two leaders with the full approval of the National Assembly, all international political difficulties might promptly disappear. They would undoubtedly reappear at a later date, particularly if the service proved successful—but for the time being it was good enough to feel that a definite beginning was clearly in sight.

It was with such high hopes that I took my memorandum to the Panchan Lama at Nanking. After the usual formal greetings, I started to read it to him.

But after a few introductory sentences, the Panchan interrupted me.

"That is good," he said. "You have brought me exactly what I wanted—definite facts to show that the aeroplane can be used in Tibet and is the best means of transport and communication. I already felt that this was so, but I wanted to be sure. The details of your report can be left in the hands of my ministers. Now we ourselves can go on to more important things."

He reached for my memorandum and handed it to Tsu.

I was a little dazed by the swiftness with which he had considered and approved all the work that had taken me so many weeks. Completely at sea, I wondered what was coming next.

"I am thinking of my people," he began. "Do you think my young men might learn to fly aeroplanes? How long would it be before they could take over this work of flying the freight of Tibet to world markets?"

The Lama would not let me answer his rapid-fire questions, but went on:

"There is no great hurry about starting this freight project. There is more hurry about starting the training of Tibetan youth for a service which seems to be inevitable."

He branched out into a discussion of his desire to enlarge the horizons and opportunities of the young manhood of his countries. When he got back again to flying, he gave me a chance to speak.

I assured him that young Tibetans certainly could be trained to fly well. The Chinese had many good fliers, and

the young men of India had proved their ability in the air. I could see no reason why the Tibetans should not equal or even exceed these neighbours of theirs.

But I pointed out that training in high altitudes would be more complicated than at sea level. Take-offs are much slower, and landings much faster. The guiding of a plane on a long take-off requires a skill which the beginner does not have; a fast landing requires a delicate touch and an accurate judgment of distance. Training would have to be longer, in order to avoid accidents.

Another problem in training would be the teaching of such textbook subjects as navigation, meteorology, theory of flight and aerobatics. Translation of the instruction into Tibetan would be difficult, for Tibetan is not a language that lends itself to the precision of science and mathematics. Even the compass is unknown as a scientific instrument, and there are no existing words for most of the routine terminology of aviation.

Certain other difficulties were obvious: the provision of petrol, which would have to be flown in by aeroplane tenders; the upkeep of equipment, which requires modern machine shops and a supply of spare parts; the preparation of landing fields, which must be of enormous size in order to provide room for the long take-offs and rapid landings.

As for the type of planes required, I could see no objection to using the models I had suggested for freight service, although they would have to be stripped of all excess weight when used for training.

The Panchan listened patiently, occasionally interrupting me with a pertinent and comprehending question. He was specially concerned over my mention of the necessity of avoiding accidents.

"There seem to be plenty of things that can go wrong, even with the experienced pilots here at Nanking," he observed. The house where he was staying, a building which had formerly housed the Ministry of War, was located on the edge of the Nanking city aerodrome, where fifteen or twenty planes arrived daily. He could watch them from his upper windows, and he frequently visited this field, as well as the smaller military field outside the city walls. It was at this spot that I later escorted him to the all-metal Junkers in which he took his first flight, an ambitious seven-hour trip to Peking.

"I have been watching these pilots," he went on. "And while I haven't seen any serious accidents, I have realized that with such speeds, the minor mishaps I have witnessed might easily have led to fatalities. . . . I wouldn't want anything like that to happen at Koko Nor—my people would not understand it."

I tried to get him away from the subject of accidents, which after all are no more avoidable in aviation than they are in motoring. But the Panchan Lama had been following the flying game closer than I suspected. He asked me what had caused the recent crash of a student at Hangchow, and why the Shanghai-Canton passenger plane had been lost with everyone aboard.

I sought to turn the conversation by mentioning the recent British flight over Mount Everest, and the trans-Andean air services, which have successfully met the problems of transport at altitudes up to 18,000 feet.

However, the Panchan was persistent. He spoke of a crash at Chungking, which had resulted in more than thirty casualties. "That was a student aviator, I suppose," he said, "or certainly one who had no great experience or ability." He seemed to have been exceptionally impressed by the Chungking accident, perhaps because nothing like it had ever occurred in Asia.

I called his attention to the fact that it was in no sense a training accident, but was a definite blunder in the use of military equipment.

He shook his head gravely. "Such things must not happen in Tibet," he said. "They would set back the development of the country."

My explanation of this incident was accepted by the Panchan Lama—that it was in no sense a training accident, but a fundamental misunderstanding of the possibilities of certain types of aeroplanes. There was no likelihood of such things happening in Tibet, provided the training was well planned and properly supervised.

The Panchan nodded gravely. "I should want the man in charge to have absolute authority in this whole matter," he said. "Not Tsu, or Lo—or even I—would ever interfere in the slightest degree. If the direction of such matters becomes my responsibility, at Koko Nor, I want to assure you that my

ACOLYTES IN A DEVIL DANCE

(Illustration facing page 288)

Even the child acolytes have a part in the devil dancing at New Year. They wear smaller masks than the monkish dancers, and serve mainly as background and scenery for the performances. . . . That the weather is wintry is evidenced by the stance of the barefoot boy on the left ; he finds the stone floor so uncomfortable that he holds his freezing feet like a stork. Behind him, another boy, who has not been chosen for the honour of participation, bites his nails in envy. In the background a contemplative monk rattles his prayer wheel and chants endlessly the little four-word sentence that is his only prayer. . . . The monastery is neither important nor wealthy, this being obvious from the crude quality of the masks and clothing.

PASSPORT TO HEAVEN

(Illustration facing page 289)

Mr. Enders and the Passport to Heaven which he received from the Panchan Lama. The complete passport, in its original colours, is reproduced in the end papers of this volume. In size it is 18 inches square, printed from wood blocks on hand-made rice paper. The first column on the left is the date, which is sealed in red with the Grand Seal of Tibet and Mongolia, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches square. On the right of it is a half-line which is the signature of the Panchan Lama, in Chinese, done with a pointed brush and sealed at the bottom with his own private seal in Sanskrit. The lettering on the right half of the sheet says: "To whom it may concern: The bearer, Mr. Enders, is a member of the Upper House of the National Assembly of Tibet and Mongolia." In the right-hand lower corner is the file number, 68. Mr. Enders is the only foreigner to hold this passport, and is the only foreign member of the Tibetan National Assembly.





policy will not be a meddling one. For the authority I would give to the man in charge would carry with it an equal amount of responsibility—a responsibility he must carry unaided.”

My talks with the Panchan continued for several months. Both in Nanking and later during his prolonged visit to Shanghai, he discussed a great variety of subjects. Sometimes his plans and policies were uppermost in his mind, but at other times he seemed to wish to lay these aside, and he would talk to me of India, or America, or Western Europe. On two or three occasions he went into the background of his religion, the essentials of its teachings, the need of the priesthood for a broader education. He talked of war and peace, and I was astonished at his knowledge of world history. The relationships between China, Japan and Russia filled him with disquiet, for he was keenly alive to the fact that these three nations would always exert a definite pressure on Tibet and Mongolia. Would their ambitions and quarrels permit the peaceful development of a Central Asian Empire?

On the side of aviation, I continued the studies I had been making, seeking to relate my programme to other forms of transportation and to the probable future development of Tibetan relationships with neighbouring nations. From time to time I discussed with the Panchan my thoughts on this subject. I discovered, however, that he had no wish to go into minor details with me; when he was satisfied that I understood the broad outlines of his thoughts, he expected me to go ahead with the task of putting the plans for them into written form, for Tsu and the others to read and digest.

CHAPTER NINE

FLY OUT THE GOLD

Man's history can be briefly told :
A few short years of washing gold,
(Or struggling with some other toil),
A wife or two with whom to coil
Upon the floor on chilly nights,
A few quick looks at thrilling sights
Viewed from a lofty mountain peak,
And then Nirvana's peace to seek.

Work, woman, food, a laugh or two,
The catalogue is far from new,
And work's the one that means the most,
Regardless of your rank or post.
'Tis your Nirvana on this earth,
And how you treat it proves your worth.
Know well your task, then onward press
To brilliant failure or success.

—*From the Tibetan*

IN an atmosphere of high optimism we awaited news of the outcome of the Panchan's peace mission to Lhasa. Its head, the Anching Hutuketu, was an emissary in whose ability, integrity and persuasiveness the Panchan had unshakable confidence. He was an ancient friend of the Dalai Lama too, and had been host and chief adviser to the latter during the five years of exile after the Younghusband expedition's entry into Tibet.

He was authorized to grant practically any concessions necessary to bring about a reconciliation, and the sincerity of the Panchan's approach to Lhasa was tangibly indicated in the fact that the mission carried gifts of gold, brocades, carpets and other treasure which had cost His Serenity an appreciable part of his carefully hoarded bank reserve.

Weeks passed after the departure of the Anching Hutuketu and his retinue of twenty-one dignitaries. They left Shanghai in May for India and sent their last cabled message, before entering Tibet, in the latter part of June. Not a word was

heard from them during the long summer. It was in September that a Press dispatch from India announced their arrival on the northern border.

Two days later the Panchan received a brief cabled report. It stated, in the blunt manner of cabled words, that the mission had been completely unsuccessful. The Dalai Lama had refused to consider reconciliation on any terms.

Within twenty-four hours the same news was published to the world by the diligent Reuter correspondents in India. The Chinese newspapers gave it great prominence, and even the smallest official of the Nanking government read every word of news and comment with the grave face of one whose carefully laid plans have gone completely wrong.

The Panchan's prestige, with his Chinese hosts, dropped overnight to zero. There would be a re-alignment, of course, in due time, and the Panchan's position as the exiled spiritual ruler of Lamaism would have to be recognized. But for the moment his dethronement from the politically important place they had built for him was complete and absolute. All discussion of further work on the Koko Nor capital was dropped. There were even quiet discussions as to cancellation of the small government subsidy which had been granted. It was felt that China must now turn an undivided attention on arranging a *modus vivendi* with the Dalai Lama, and their relations with the Panchan must not be allowed to prejudice the success of these negotiations.

As for my plans looking toward a Tibetan air service, the peace mission's failure seemed to have pushed them into a distant and dubious future. I sympathized deeply with the Panchan's disappointment, but I could see no way in which I could help to lighten it.

I had several talks with Tsu, who was completely at sea as to the next move to be made but was too much of a fatalist to let the situation completely unnerve him. "What will be, will be," he repeated resignedly. "All we can do is wait. My master will think of a way. He will be inspired by his prayers, and when he is ready he will send for us."

I was occupied for the next weeks with business matters in Shanghai, but all the time disturbed that no summons came to me from the Panchan. Tsu was an occasional visitor, and from him I learned only that the Panchan was going about his spiritual affairs with outward placidity, ignoring the coldness

of Chinese officialdom, and awaiting calmly the arrival from India of the Anching Hutuketu, with such detailed information and confidential reports as he might be expected to bring.

The Anching and his suite arrived in Shanghai and went north immediately to the distant monastery where the Panchan awaited them. Tsu remained quietly in Nanking.

"We shall hear from the Master very soon now," he told me, with a confidence I could not share. "There will be important news, I am sure."

The important news, however, came not from the north, but from those same indefatigable Reuter correspondents in India.

Tsu was in Shanghai for a few days and was stopping at the New Asia Hotel on Tibet Road. I had spent the evening with him discussing past, present and future in a desultory and aimless way. I could see that the strain of the situation was telling on him, despite his brave front. He was more nervous than usual, his voice was pitched a little higher and his words came in a sharp staccato. I left him at a late hour and went home.

It was not yet six o'clock in the morning when I was awakened by a terrific ringing of the doorbell. I heard the boy answer, and the next I knew there came Tsu's excited voice from the front room, commanding the boy to get me up.

I was there before the boy had time to summon me. Tsu looked at me and opened his mouth to speak, but no words came. He was so excited that he had temporarily lost his voice. But he was able to hold out toward me a copy of the morning newspaper, which he was tapping violently with a nervous forefinger, pointing at a short front-page dispatch.

I took the paper and read. The dispatch announced, in a single sentence, the sudden death of the Dalai Lama!

I was as stunned as Tsu. Here was a turn of events that, oddly enough, none of us had ever anticipated or considered.

Its implications were enormous. Death of the Dalai made the Panchan the sole surviving member of the Tibetan trinity. No successor to the Mongolian member of the trinity had yet been chosen, and no successor to the Dalai could come of age for nearly twenty years. For two decades the Panchan's rule would be supreme and unquestioned. Temporal and spiritual

power would be concentrated in him. His words, his thoughts, his plans would be the supreme law of his country, and all its resources would be his to command. Although it would be many days before the Panchan would receive this news in his distant northern monastery, he was already the undisputed head of the theocracy in Tibet, Koko Nor and Mongolia.

These were the thoughts that rushed through my brain as I stared wide-eyed at Tsu.

"You have sent your master the news?" I said finally to Tsu.

"Of course," he replied, with an effort to appear matter-of-fact. "I have telegraphed—and from the end of the line the message will go by automobile messengers. The Master will come, I think, to Nanking very soon. Nanking will send for him before the day is much older. They will shower him with honours and forget that they have permitted their friendship to cool a little during the past months."

Our enthusiasm was dampened, during the next few days, by the supplementary dispatches from the Indian frontier. There were rumours that the Dalai Lama's death had not been a natural one, but had been the result of revolutionary plottings among some of his impatient followers.

The Young Tibetans had got out of hand, and the dispatches suggested that they had poisoned the old man, eager to seize the power for themselves.

If these elements were now in control at Lhasa, they would be as hostile to the Panchan as they had been to the Dalai. And they had an army to support them.

It might be necessary for the Panchan Lama to subjugate the revolutionists before he could assume the place which was his by right.

Before Tsu heard anything from his master, we had learned also of the death of Lung Shar, the Dalai's minister of war and chief supporter. Lung Shar had been taken prisoner by the revolutionists, his eyes had been gouged out and he had been thrown into a black dungeon to die.

A fortnight later the Panchan arrived in Nanking. Urgent appeals from Lhasa were awaiting him, beseeching him to come immediately to the Tibetan capital, assume power and put down the revolutionists.

But again he declined any resort to force of arms. To the Chinese officials who obsequiously brought him the messages from Lhasa, he said only that he would wait a while before

replying, that he had no doubt the situation in Lhasa would solve itself, that revolution would soon burn out, that he would return only when a united country could receive him, peacefully. That this time would come he was very confident. Meanwhile he would occupy himself with his plans, his work, his prayers.

He was now, suddenly, one of the most important figures in Asia. China gave him a place on the Supreme Council. Diplomats of all nations flocked to do him honour. Even Japan suddenly recognized his power and sought by every possible means to court his favour.

For the first few weeks after his arrival in Nanking he devoted most of his time to an exhaustive ritual of prayer for the soul of the Dalai Lama, that it might pass safely through purgatory into the next stage of its existence.

It was while this was still under way that I received my long-awaited summons. I was surprised at the change in the Panchan. He seemed much older than on the occasion of my last previous audience, and so worn that it required a visible effort for him to speak more than a few words at a time.

I would have been greatly worried about his physical condition if Tsu had not informed me that the Master's fatigue was due solely to the unprecedented programme of prayers which he had laid out for himself. He was spending no less than fifteen or sixteen hours a day in chanting verses of scripture and executing the difficult mudras which accompanied them. All on behalf of a man who in recent years had been his bitter and outspoken enemy!

He had summoned me, not to talk about aeroplanes or transportation, but to inform me that he was going to spend several weeks in Shanghai studying matters which would affect the future of Central Asia, and he asked me to set that time aside, if I could, to help him in organizing his investigations.

"Meanwhile, I want to assure you," he said, "that the matters which we have discussed in the past are still close to my heart. For the time being they must remain in abeyance, owing to circumstances here in Nanking which Tsu will make clear to you."

The matters to which he referred, as elucidated by Tsu during the next few days, were political and international.

The Nanking government was urging his immediate departure for Lhasa, with the support of a column of picked Chinese troops. So determined were they on this policy that already they had issued orders for the clearing and fortification of the roads through the outlying provinces, up to the border of Tibet. The Panchan's reply was to stand staunchly on his earlier declarations that he would return only to a peacefully united Tibet.

Other governments also were importunate in their efforts to get the Panchan's favourable decision on questions which affected their status in Asia. The Japanese were particularly persistent. Japanese officials of every variety—military, naval and diplomatic—dogged his footsteps. Exactly what they wanted was never made quite clear, but first of all they sought to be always at hand, to get the Panchan's suite accustomed to the presence of Japanese on every occasion. Of course, their ultimate object was to win the Panchan's favour, by hook or by crook, for their ambitions in Lamaist Manchuria and Mongolia.

The Russians, too, were active. The British were politely present, anxious to be of service.

On the fringes of these official and semi-official groups were all sorts of Chinese and international plotters, concession seekers, salesmen, lobbyists and fanatics. The Panchan found himself the centre of an active maelstrom whose currents were mysterious, treacherous and dangerous.

The Panchan's handling of his situation was, to my mind, a faultless piece of statesmanship. In public his personal magnetism never failed him. He avoided private audiences as much as possible, but when it was necessary to receive an official guest, he did so without ever committing himself, but also without offending his visitor.

I knew, through Tsu and the other members of his cabinet, that he was considerably perturbed by the problems facing him, but he certainly never let his worries show through to the public.

Within a few weeks he put into effect his plan for a Shanghai visit, and during the two months which he spent there I was with him daily. The things he sought in Shanghai were made entirely clear to me. In anticipation of the time when he would return to a throne in Central Asia, he had set himself

to learn as much as possible about the Western world. For eight weeks in Shanghai he studied intensively the machinery of modern civilization—factories, radio stations, battleships, motor transport, police administration, schools, hospitals, sports, international banking, diplomacy, trade, journalism, communication of all kinds.

The year before, he had started a weekly Tibetan newspaper in Nanking, edited by my old friend Liu. Printed in the Tibetan language, it had gradually built for itself a firm place among the 8,000,000 Lamaists in China and Mongolia. I often visited Liu in his editorial sanctum and discussed his plans for eventually moving the offices of the paper to Koko Nor. When I suggested that perhaps Lhasa would be a more suitable place, Liu pointed to the map of Asia on the wall behind his desk, where the heart-shaped area of Koko Nor was heavily outlined, and declared that "never again will Lhasa be the centre of Lamaism, for the Central Asian states will henceforth be united at Koko Nor."

Another important activity which the Panchan had inaugurated was educational in character. About twenty Tibetan youths had been brought to the Chinese universities and technical schools, recommended by the abbots of the great monasteries in Koko Nor Province and in the district of Tashilhunpo. They were studying to become surveyors, radio operators, road builders, power-plant engineers and metallurgists. Two or three of them were taking courses in accountancy, banking and trade economics.

From the budding capital at Koko Nor came also to China a much larger body of young men who, under the Panchan's guidance, became apprentices in various trades, meanwhile mastering the intricacies of written and spoken Chinese.

In all these things the Nanking government co-operated heartily, helping the pontiff with his carefully planned schemes for laying the foundations of popular education in Central Asia.

The Lama's predilection for Americans was constantly shown during his visit to Shanghai. An American battleship was the first salt-water craft he visited, and he studied the workings of the American Telephone Company, the Ford and General Motors assembly plants, the American electric light and power stations, the piers of the Dollar Steamship Company, the huge installations of the Standard Oil Company.

While he was inspecting the Standard Oil plant from a

launch, he remarked on the size of a huge vacant field which the company has reserved for future expansion. It was being used as a golf course, but it occurred to the Panchan that it would make an ideal landing place for the proposed Tibetan air service. "Here we could bring our fuelling planes to keep Koko Nor supplied with gasoline," he remarked to me.

He visited a Chinese woollen mill and watched the wool being carded, spun and made into cloth. The raw wool was from Kansu, a Chinese province adjoining Koko Nor. "We can't send our Koko Nor wool to Shanghai," he observed, "but we might build our own mill and make cloth for our own use." He asked many questions, particularly as to whether yak wool and silken goat and camel hair could be similarly fabricated by machinery, and he was delighted to learn from the Chinese manager that the machines he was looking at could handle these raw materials with trifling alterations.

Power plants held a fascination for him. Fuel is almost entirely lacking in Tibet and Mongolia, but water power, for hydro-electric development, is available in a thousand places. The idea of providing cheap electricity for every Tibetan village was one of his dreams.

The second week of his visit in Shanghai led him to a tour of the hospitals. Here he became suddenly interested in dentistry, and decided that he must have his teeth fixed. On the recommendation of the hospital authorities, he went to Dr. Wong, a young Chinese dentist with a diploma from the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Wong's Philadelphia training had made him a blunt and outspoken individual, who frowned as he examined the pontiff's mouth and immediately began berating his patient for so long neglecting his teeth.

"I'm surprised you aren't coming to see me in a wheel chair," said the dentist, branching off into a long discussion of focal infections, and other dire things that would have happened to His Serenity if his visit had been delayed another week or two.

The incarnation took it all in good part. He even admitted that he had suffered spasmodically over a long period of time from toothache, and he ordered Dr. Wong not to spare him, but to attend to everything.

The result was that the dapper Chinese dentist was kept busy for two weeks, extracting, filling and bridging. When the job was done, the Grand Lama had lost several of his

ancient Tibetan molars and in their place had some stout American porcelains, which have served him excellently ever since.

It was Dr. Wong who noticed that the Panchan's eyesight was none too good, and suggested that it would be greatly helped by the use of glasses. The pontiff, pleased with the improvement in his teeth, consented immediately to visiting an oculist, and was fitted with a pair of reading glasses, which pleased him doubly when he learned that they came from New York City.

With his teeth and eyes thus Americanized, the Panchan spent a large part of his last week in Shanghai discussing aviation with me. The reason why he cancelled a number of otherwise important engagements to spend his time with me was that I had found it necessary to leave within a few weeks for America on private matters, and as the Panchan was to spend the summer in Mongolia, it was unlikely that we would meet again for some time. I hoped that by the time I was ready to return to China, the Panchan's return to Tibet would have been arranged.

I had developed a definite scheme for the proposed Tibetan aviation service, with a budget which I felt would be within the means of the Panchan's government. I had gone over every detail of it with Tsu. Now I submitted it for the Panchan's comment and approval.

The Panchan's attitude toward me in our week of conference was reminiscent of my boyhood relationship with Chanti. We were *guru* and *chela*. He frequently reminded me that I was a member of the Upper House of the Tibetan National Assembly, and he would say with a whimsical smile that I was the only member of his Senate whom he was privileged to consult at the present time. It was borne upon me that I had certain prerogatives that not even Tsu could claim: my passport entitled me to address myself direct to His Serenity at any time without an invitation from him to speak. This right none of his cabinet members had. Tsu always remained standing rigidly erect in the presence of his master: I sat beside him and shared his tea, his cakes and the open tin of cigarettes which he kept at hand for his guests. He himself never smoked.

The Panchan went over my detailed memoranda more

carefully than I had ever known him to do. He wore his new glasses and showed his new teeth as he smilingly listened to my explanations of the figures I had prepared. It took three successive interviews before the pontiff was satisfied.

At the end of the week I was able to put into his hands a six-page plan, every detail of which had his approval. How and when it was to be put into effect depended now upon political developments in Tibet and the eventual return of the Panchan to his native land.

Tsu took the plan and, folding it deliberately twice, put it into the pocket of the Tibetan coat which he wore under his long-gown.

The Panchan handed me a fresh cigarette from the tin box of British Capstans on the table. "And now," he suggested, with the air of making a completely fresh start on the affairs of state, "I think there are other phases of this matter which we might discuss."

The most unusual characteristic of the Panchan Lama, and one which almost always comes to light when he is in conference on serious matters, is his talent for dramatic surprise. When everyone else has finished and the opinion is general that the day's business has been satisfactorily concluded, His Serenity suddenly poses the subject in a new light, showing that the conclusions which have been reached lead inevitably to fresh and often startling new developments.

Thus it was that he had shown Chinese officialdom the importance of their heart-shaped province of Koko Nor; thus also he had persuaded them to accept a priestly peace-mission to Lhasa. In a lesser way he had frequently turned my conferences with him into paths I had not anticipated.

So on this occasion I smiled as he suggested that the conclusions we had reached regarding a Tibetan aviation service were only the beginning.

There was a quaint artistry in the deliberate manner in which he always used this rhetorical artifice of his. It reminded me somehow of the way in which Chanti used to turn Jowar's arguments into channels which frequently bewildered the stolid hillman. Chanti, however, had learned it after a college education in one of the best schools of India. Whence had it come to the Panchan, son of an obscure woodchopper, whose education had consisted solely in memorizing scripture texts?

I had not the slightest idea as to what direction he proposed to take now. He soon showed me, however, how thoroughly he was convinced of the merits of aviation in Tibetan development.

"There is one contingency that we have not yet considered," he said. "Suppose my return to Tibet is postponed for a long time! Must we therefore conclude that an aeroplane service is also to be delayed for the same length of time? I think not. Isn't it possible to do this worthy thing for my people, even though I have not yet assumed the full authority to command it for them?"

"During your absence in America, I suggest that you consider ways and means of inaugurating a Tibetan aeroplane service on a private footing. I have the necessary Chinese permits, which I will turn over to you. Your enterprise would be in the nature of a concession granted to an individual American, but its development would be a matter of personal interest to me, and on the Tibetan side my benediction would, I think, make your path easy with the northern monasteries on which you must largely depend for your cargoes."

I expressed my interest and pleasure in his suggestion, and assured him that I would give it the fullest study and consideration.

I bade him good-bye the next morning in the same private audience chamber. Outside, a crowd of diplomats and Chinese officials waited to escort him to the North Station, and a hundred of his personal followers and retainers bustled about with their baggage and preparations for departure.

Tsu had notified me that the Panchan wished to give me a few words of farewell. The pontiff seated me beside him on the tufted sofa. He seemed relaxed and happy after his strenuous two months in Shanghai. He was dressed in a simple robe of yellow silk which was cut like a Chinese long-gown. His rosary was in his right hand, and his little black and white lion dog fluttered at his heels. Now and then, as we talked informally, the Panchan leaned down and stroked the dog's silken ears or pulled gently at her feathered tail. The little animal inspected the cuffs of my trousers with her snubby nose, waved her tail approvingly and scampered gaily around the tea table and back, to sit again at the silk-clad feet of her master.

Tsu remained standing like a ramrod on the Panchan's left hand. We waited respectfully for the pontiff to speak.

"I have had a pleasant time in Shanghai," he said, after he had pushed the tea-pot over toward me and made sure that I had my buttered tea and cigarettes. His tone was quite casual and easy. He pulled at his loose sleeves with characteristic, swift movements as he talked. "But most of all I am pleased that we have made such good progress with our programme of aviation. And I am glad that you will have an opportunity to discuss it in America. For America is a big country and they think of things in a big way. Moreover, there are many questions regarding the details of our enterprise which need to be considered by men who have met similar problems. Listen to what they say, and test our plan, step by step, under their practical judgment."

He slipped into a few reminiscences of the things he had seen in Shanghai—schools, hospitals, libraries, industrial plants, paved roads and motor transport. He tried to picture these very things in Koko Nor, at the crossroads of the Central Asian Empire. Unconsciously, as he spoke of Koko Nor, his supple fingers formed themselves into the shape of a heart.

"It will be Asia's market place," he said. "The interchange of goods, between the Caspian country and China, between Mongolia and Tibet, will be a great thing for my people. And there will be an interchange of ideas too—just as potent as material merchandise. Thus shall we regain our birthright and our leadership, the ancient glory of Attila, Kublai Khan and Tamerlane."

Eventually he came back to our parting. He didn't seem to be at all worried about the diplomats and officials who waited impatiently outside.

"I am going northward to my beloved Peilingmiao," he said, "and you, too, are going far away. I go to await the call, which I am confident will come. Your call, too, will come at the same time. Then, indeed, I shall need all my friends."

He paused and became again the priest-pontiff of Lamaism. He passed three or four beads of his rosary slowly through his fingers. Then impressively he rose, and I did likewise.

"It is well, my chela," he said, after a moment's thought,

'that you should know something of my immediate plans. I am sending the Anching Hutuketu again to Lhasa, to prepare for what is to come. The Dalai Lama's spirit has returned to earth in the form of a Tibetan baby, still in his mother's womb. The hour is approaching when he will make himself known to us, and it will be my high privilege to ordain him. For that ceremony, I must go back to Lhasa.'

The Panchan spoke very slowly. With the first sentences, he had taken off his spectacles and closed his eyes. His words came as from an oracle, reading the future. And when he opened his eyes, there was in them a strong appeal that I should rely without reservation upon his words.

"Lhasa?" He repeated the word with a full-flavoured Tibetan accent. "It is ten years since I have seen the sacred Potala. Now, very soon, I must again be there. Just how the way will be opened I do not know, but I am ready. After a brief stay at Peilingmiao, I shall go to Raja-gompa, the great monastery on the Chinese frontier, near Kumbum. That will be my point of departure for Koko Nor and Lhasa, whenever the Anching Hutuketu notifies me that the time is ripe."

I was surprised to hear this detailed programme, because I knew the many difficulties—financial, political and physical—that stood in the way. Even the entry of the Panchan to Koko Nor would have to be made in state, with pomp and ceremony even more elaborate and imposing than that which had accompanied his hegira to North China. Where would the money come from? Would the Chinese government approve of his prolonged absence from the political scene on a religious mission to identify the infant Dalai?

The Panchan seemed to read the questions in my mind.

"My colleagues on the Supreme Council of China have pledged their full co-operation. They will supply all that I need." He paused and smiled, "In fact," he went on, "they embarrass me by offering me more than I can possibly use—five thousand head of cattle for food, and two thousand pack animals, with a small army to guard them on the road. You, my son, must prepare for the day which is near at hand."

His words were a complete answer to my mental questionings. I was too full of the things he had said to

speaking. I simply bowed. In a few words of swift Tibetan, he gave me his final benediction.

As I left his presence, there flashed through my mind the various roles in which I had seen this extraordinary individual.

I had seen him in his supreme role as the spiritual ruler of Lamaism, the living Lord Buddha, officiating at the most splendid series of public prayers ever staged in China. These had taken place in the Temple-that-Flew-over-from-India, located at Hangchow, and for two weeks the Panchan had presided over services dedicated to the peace of the world, surrounded by vessels of solid gold, draperies of richest silk brocade, priests costumed in splendour unequalled since medieval times.

I had seen him in his Garden of Gethsemane at Nanking, a humble suppliant praying for the soul of the Dalai Lama, his ancient enemy. Never was prayer more intense, more fervent or more mystical. Seated cross-legged on a high satin throne and surrounded by blue wreaths of pale incense, the Panchan in his dull robes of sombre red had prayed and chanted with an unworldly look of benevolence on his face. In the half-light I had watched him as he waved his hypnotic hands in mudras, to the accompaniment of the blare of tortured conches and silver-bound woodwinds from a hooded orchestra at his feet.

I had seen him as diplomat and statesman, meeting with poise and dignity the diplomatic representatives of the great powers, greeting them with a confident smile and an inflexible will to turn every circumstance to the advantage of his own people and his dream for them.

I had seen him as an astute business man, one who demanded to know facts and figures, a builder of vision and an engineer of empire.

I had seen him in his days of great weariness at Nanking, when he had been only a bone-weary human being who drooped like any other man under the burden of great responsibilities.

And to day I had seen him, with his lion dog, happy and care-free, quick of smile and casually reminiscent in conversation—perhaps the most human of all the pictures I was to carry back with me to America. Certainly not the abstraction which Chinese officialdom pictured as standing for the will of Tibet and Mongolia.

To-day I could believe him the woodchopper's son, whose name by a train or mysterious events had found its way into the golden vase of *bumba* at Lhasa. I could picture the rugged landscape of the lonely valley in deep Tibet that had been his father's home, the rough mud and stone hut with its flat roof, nestling close to the mountainside, the sacred baby straddling his mother's hip as she bent stolidly to blow the fire in the centre of the floor.

My mind suddenly transported me back along an abandoned path of associations, to Almorah and the earnest precepts of Chanti, and I wondered by what mysterious force the woodchopper's son and Chanti's *chela* had been drawn together in China, half-way across the continent. There arose in me a longing to turn back and tell the woodchopper's son that, regardless of race and station, we were surely in many ways kindred. I didn't do it, but if I had, I am sure that the pontiff would have smiled his quick smile, shaken his loose sleeves once or twice and nodded a ready agreement.

As I pushed through the crowd of diplomats and officials in the outer rooms, I was reminded of a phrase the Panchan had given me one evening at Nanking: "To each of us his work is apportioned: the outcome is the affair of Fate."

There came back to me the chorus of an old Tibetan song which Chanti had taught me—a farewell to a warrior going forth to battle among the snowy passes of the Himalayas. If the Panchan's situation was not entirely similar, it seemed to me that the words somehow applied to the spirit of his departure:

Ride forth on your mission, Adventuresome One,
Go conquer the Mountains, Stars, Moon and the Sun.
Good luck! And some day (if you don't disappear)
Your story is one we'll be waiting to hear.
Dress warmly, be sure that your weapons are right,
Take a last look around, ere you bid us good night,
At these scenes of the past that you're leaving behind;
Look hard so the pictures will stay in your mind.
They'll help you to live and they'll help you to die,
So drink it all in before saying good-bye . . .
Good journey, good weather, Adventuresome One!
Make all do your bidding: Stars, Moon and the Sun.

Announcements for 1936

JAPAN MUST FIGHT BRITAIN

Lt.-Comdr. Tota Ishimaru

For over thirty years people in this country have regarded Japan as one of our closest friends, but recent events in the Far East have caused us to view her actions with something approaching alarm.

Countless books have been written giving the Western viewpoint, but here for the first time we have a clear, logical exposé from the pen of an authoritative Japanese author of this so-called Pan-Asia movement as the Japanese people see it; a movement designed to establish Tokyo as the pivot of an Empire 1,000,000,000 people strong.

After reviewing the economic and diplomatic differences that have changed the attitude of Britain from friendship to enmity, the author discusses the inevitability of war between the two powers, detailing the relative strengths and weaknesses of their Army, Navy and Air Force, a comparison from which Britain emerges as definitely the weaker. He claims that the Singapore base is an insult to Japan, that the Dominions are apathetic and of little material aid in the event of war, that the British Navy is decadent.

Concluding, he urges Britain to realize the terrible disadvantages under which she would labour in such a struggle, and to avoid it by making such concessions as will satisfy Japan, concessions that will assure Japan's domination of the Pacific. If she will not give way, then war is inevitable, and the result will be that the British Empire will be broken up for ever.

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his latest work, he provides an equally stirring and first-hand story from another angle of his experience as an active member of the old Imperial Russian Intelligence Service.

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Author of "Gallant Gentlemen", "The Sea Raiders", "Amazing Adventure".

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Meanwhile, some exciting sea incidents are taking place up the Ægean, of which the author has obtained first-hand accounts from the participants. There are some wonderful narratives of British drifters with their rough and hearty fishermen crews trapping submarines in the Otranto Straits, daring to fight even Austrian cruisers, and winning the Victoria Cross. The story of how these Straits were finally blocked by a net-barrage, and how all the anti-submarine difficulties were worked out, is in itself a

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wonderful account. Here also the author has been given the accounts of eye-witnesses.

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